

Study Guide To Accompany A Howard Reader

*An Intellectual and
Cultural Quilt of
the African-American
Experience*



Paul E. Logan

STUDY GUIDE TO ACCOMPANY

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A Howard Reader: Development and Intellectual Heritage

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The idea for *A Howard Reader* resulted from what I and others, having encountered members of several freshman classes, felt was an urgent need. In talking with students, it became clear that there were, through no fault of their own, gapping lacunae in their knowledge of the African American's contributions to the intellectual, cultural, and social development of this nation, of the African-American discourse—a discourse of cultural detachment, entrapment, and, according to Henry Louis Gates, of reappropriation, to which James Baldwin eloquently speaks:

I know, in any case, that the most crucial time in my own development came when I was forced to recognize that I was a kind of bastard of the West; when I followed the line of my past, I did not find myself in Europe but in Africa. And this meant that in some subtle way, in a really profound way, I brought to Shakespeare, Bach, Rembrandt, to the stones of Paris, to the cathedral at Chartres, and to the Empire State Building, a special attitude. These were not really my reactions. They did not contain my history; I might search in them in vain forever for any reflection of myself. I was an interloper; this was not my heritage. At the same time, I had no other heritage which I could possibly hope to use. I had certainly been unfitted for the jungle or the tribe. I would have to appropriate these white centuries, I would have to make them mine.—I would have to accept my special attitude, my special place in this scheme—otherwise I would have no place in any scheme.

Thus, it is the purpose of the *Reader* to afford students an opportunity to engage this and similar discourses—those of the examined self, place and self-expression and to become familiar with many of the names of the major contributors to the discourse. What my colleagues and I began to do was to construct a vehicle which would, in some case, restore memory, and, in most cases, provide reading opportunities which, we hoped, would become the bedrocks of our students' reading experiences. Additionally, we wanted to prepare a stage on which the drama of the African-American experience within the context of America could be presented.

So it was here where we wanted to begin to chart a remarkable journey, recounting attempts to rename us, to erase us, but, most important, to recount our successes at naming ourselves and drawing boldly the lines of our humanity. We began with *The Federalist Papers*, the *Declaration of Independence* and the *Constitution* to engage a discussion of their importance among the sacred documents of American political history.

Not until 1865 did the Nation amend the *Constitution* to abolish slavery (s. Article XIII, *Reader*, 90). And not until 1868, in Article XIV of the *Constitution* (s. *Reader*, 90), did the Nation recognize the African American as a citizen with all of the privileges and immunities accorded to all other citizens. In the matter of freedom for the enslaved African, the *Reader* provides the text of the *Emancipation Proclamation* and James McPherson's enlightening essay "Who Freed the Slaves?" As a stunning example of the African American's quest for freedom, Paul Finkelman's essay "The Union Army's Fighting 54th" is provided. Fighting for themselves and their people, the soldiers of the 54th trumpeted their people's humanity, ability, and place in the nation.

Out of the chaos of the Civil War, just two years after the ratification of Article XIII; just two years after the surrender of General Robert E. Lee to General Ulysses S. Grant; in the face of 18th- and 19th-century views of race, outlined in Stephen Jay Gould's essay "American Polygeny and Craniometry before Darwin: Blacks and Indians as Separate, Inferior Species," namely that on the scale of racial ranking, blacks were at the very bottom; that blacks were inferior; that their biological status justified enslavement and colonization; that, although, according to Benjamin Franklin, the inferiority of blacks is cultural and remedial, they were still unwelcome; that, according to Thomas Jefferson, "blacks, whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time and circumstance, are inferior to the whites in the endowment both of body and mind"; that, according to Abraham Lincoln, there is a physical difference between the white and black races which, he believed, would forever forbid the two races living together on terms of social and political equality; that Lincoln, on a piece of paper, scribbled in 1859, his rejection of the notion of "Negro equality"; in the face of "scientific" evidence akin to that of Herrnstein and Murray (*The Bell Curve*) and utterances from some church pulpits that the "African is an inferior variety of our species," **emerged Howard University** in what Noble Laureate Toni Morrison called an interventionist mode to offer freshly freed slaves opportunities to pursue higher education and to become that place where some of the most important, salient issues which affected the African American and the nation were debated, to become that place whose sons and daughters, through their intellect and contributions, provided not only evidence to counter those 18th- and 19th-century views on race, but documented their enormous and incredibly creative leap from slavery to freedom.

These are the things which we wanted to make clear in the *Reader*. Howard became that place where its "first" African-American

President, Mordecai Wyatt Johnson, in his Inaugural Address in 1927 – sixty years after the founding of the University, testified to the University's being a monument to the capacity of the Negro, its being "one of the great romances of American education"—its having become that place "in which," said Johnson, "the Negro shall come to full self-consciousness about where he is, where he hopes to go, what difficulties are in the way, and how he can get there with the good will of his fellow citizens and that the studies which contribute to this end be developed here on the highest plane of efficiency." It became that place where the African American threw off the labels which others had used to define him and where he began to define himself and to give voice to his concerns, through legal challenges, about the American system of justice. Here is where the Old Negro was abandoned, and in the words of Alain LeRoy Locke, the New Negro was created—created to engage serious study about African-American's genius evidenced in the creative arts—early studies like those conducted by Professor of English Benjamin Brawley in his book *The Negro Genius* and the more comprehensive study on the Negro spiritual conducted and published by Dr. John Lovell Jr. in his seminal work, *Black Songs: The Forge and the Flame*. Here is where the great sociologist E. Franklin Frazier provided a scholarly and critical assessment of the black middle-class in his book *Black Bourgeoisie*; where Professor Sterling Allen Brown in the subtlest of all of the essays—one entitled "Negro Character As Seen by White Authors"—explores how the image of the African American had been distorted by many white authors, and in so doing, reveals the true face of white racism and who, in the fact, the African American is. Here is the place where James Madison Nabrit Jr., Thurgood Marshall, John Hope Franklin, Herbert O. Reid, Charles T. Duncan, and many others researched and prepared the case *Brown v. Board of Education*; where Professor Nabrit, according to Dr. Michael R. Winston in his article "James Madison Nabrit, Jr.," also

included in the *Reader* , prepared himself for arguing major voting rights and education cases, while developing a set of theories in constitutional law which were “more aggressive than the consensus views of the National Legal Committee of the NAACP and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund,” making Howard University a leader in the early Civil Rights Movement; — where art educator James V. Herring developed new programs in art education and together with Alonzo Aden, collected works by African-American artists to form the Barnett-Aden Collection, one of the largest collections of works by African-American artists; where the great African-American artist Lois Mailou Jones, encouraged by Alain Locke, abandoned temporarily the still lifes of Paris and Impressionism and began to portray her people; where the progeny of Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison was nurtured and where she began her first novel *The Bluest Eye* . Here is where scholars like Ralph Bunche and Carter G. Woodson found fertile ground for their critical studies of black organizations and education; where Professor Rayford W. Logan documented, among other things, the denial of rights of citizenship to the Negro from 1877 until 1901 in his book *The Betrayal of the Negro* ; where Professor Stephen Henderson, critic and author of *Understanding the New Black Poetry* , became Director of the Institute for Arts and Humanities; oversaw the documentation of the literary expressions of the contemporary African-American poets and writers—artists like Larry Neal, Haki Mahabuti, and Amiri Baraka—and continued the work of the Black Arts Movement.

Here is the place where the art of E. Ethelbert Miller flourishes; where Professor Tritobia H. Benjamin puts into historical perspective the artistic expressions of Lois Mailou Jones and other African-American artists; where Professor Raymond G. Dobard explores life's expression in the African-American quilt; and where Professor Eleanor W. Traylor summons up the traditions of the African-American legacy in literature as “a rigorous examination

of [African-American] texts of the past in the present; the inclusion of two histories in dialectical conversation; one's own history and that of an other; . . . the creation of a community of memory where we hear our own voices, in multiplicity, articulate what we need and what we feel to be the best in human life."

All of these things and many more represent the intellectual heritage found in *A Howard Reader* -- an intellectual heritage of, according to Alain Locke in *The New Negro*, "the belief in the efficacy of collective effort"... of success in converting a defensive into an offensive position, a handicap into an incentive; it is heritage radical in tone on matters dealing with racial justice and one which fosters the discourse of modernity.



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ESSAY STYLES

Introduction

1. narration

2. descriptive essay/narrative

3. process/analysis essay

4. comparison/ contrast essay

5. definition essays

6. cause and effect writing

7. persuasion and argument

Conclusion

The resources available to us for benign access to each other, for vaulting the mere blue air that separates us, are few but powerful: language, image, and experience, which may involve both, one, or neither of the first two. Language (saying, listening, reading) can encourage, even mandate surrender, the breach of distances among us, whether they are continental or on the same pillow, whether they are distances of culture or the distinctions and indistinctions of age or gender, whether they are the consequences of social invention or biology. Image increasingly rules the realm of shaping, sometimes becoming, often contaminating, knowledge. Provoking language or eclipsing it, an image can determine not only what we know and feel but also what we believe is worth knowing about what we feel.

Toni Morrison, "Strangers"

INTRODUCTION

This section of the Study Guides provides the student with assistance in reading critically the selections in *A Howard Reader* (henceforth referred to as "Reader"). Specifically, it provides the reader with elementary tools necessary to follow arguments which are presented in the selections – tools to look for evidence; to identify images; and to understand the core of the issues which the authors explore. The ability to read critically can enhance and enrich our intellectual lives as well as assist us in confirming or reevaluating our perspectives on important issues or topics.

In this section of the Study Guides, seven types of writing are briefly discussed, and selections from the "Reader" are cited to assist the student in identifying the strategies which a writer can use to achieve his or her goals.

1. The user of **narration** seeks to make a point and to provide a detailed, descriptive, and sometimes, personal account of an event or experience. He or she might use narration to report on the March on Washington in 1963, a recollection of an escape from enslavement or of the impact which a person has had on one's life. The recollection is sometimes arranged by the narrator in some form of chronological order. The events may be told by the narrator who could have been a participant in or observer of the event and wants to inform an audience of what happened. An excellent example of such a chronological narration is presented in Howell Raines' "**Grady's Gift**" ("Reader," 62). In it Raines wants the audience to know how he came to write one of the seminal books on the American Civil Rights Movement, *My Soul is Rested*. Raines informs the audience by recounting the "acres of afternoon" discussions which he had with Grady Stein Williams Hutchinson.

Purposes for using narration:

(1) to illustrate a subject, e.g., to argue against the death penalty by recounting a story of an innocent man who had been executed;

(2) to analyze an issue or theme; (*An excellent example is James Baldwin's essay "**Stranger in the Village**" ("Reader," 202). In it Baldwin recounts personal experiences which lead to a discussion of the "place" of the African American in the Western world. The reader will note in "**Stranger in the Village**" that its primary evidence is secondary to the explanation of the causes of racism and to the argument for an end to the mindlessness of prejudice*); and

(3) to impart autobiographical, biographical, or fictional material. Here the narrative form is more than evidence or experience, but subject. Review the following selections in the "Reader": *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass Written by Himself* (254); Michael R. Winston's "**James Madison Nabrit, Jr.**" (325); Ralph Ellison's "**Epilogue**" (485); and Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon* (500).

The success of any account depends on the writer's ability to transform an experience into a narrative in which a *story* is located, i.e., to reveal the TENSION on which the action focuses. The tension might be between the narrator and the world, as in the case of Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*; the narrator and others, as in Baldwin's recollection of the villagers' perception of the "stranger" amongst them; between the past and the future, as in Toni Cade Bambara's "**Deep Sight and Rescue Mission**" ("Reader," 228) which reveals a tension in a society which struggles to move to the future without losing its grip on the past; or yet there might be tension within a fictional character, as in the case of Richard Wright's Bigger ("Reader": *Flight*, 489). Committed to his or her story, the writer sequences and "tempo" it so that it achieves his or her goal.

After the writer has revealed the TENSION, he or she must arrange a sequence of events, namely the PLOT, so that the reader will know the origin of the TENSION. That sequence of events does not have to

be presented chronologically. Toni Morrison, for example, begins her novel *The Bluest Eye* at the end and “patchquilt” the sequence of events to reveal the ultimate cause and result of Pecola’s dilemma. The sequence of events or the pattern of the plot depends on the goal which the author is attempting to achieve and the “understanding” to which he or she attempts to bring his or her readers.

How quickly that is done is determined by the TEMPO at which the story is told. Some writers will use all deliberate speed to achieve their goals by omitting details, compressing time, or summarizing events.

Having revealed the TENSION, arranged the sequence of events, and set the TEMPO of their narratives, the writers must establish a POINT OF VIEW. Point of view refers to the person and the position and attitude of the narrator to the narrative. *Person* merely refers to whether the writer tells the story as “I”: “In going underground, I whipped it all except the mind, the mind” (from Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man*), or as “he” or “she”: “As fleet and bright as a lodestar *he* wheeled toward Guitar and it did not matter which one of them would give up his ghost in the killing arms of his brother. For now *he* knew what Shalimar knew: If you surrendered to the air, you could *ride* it” (from Toni Morrison’s *Song of Solomon*).

Setting or *place* helps create the writer’s attitude -- how he or she feels about the events which are revealed. Look to the selections in Chapter Nine in the “Reader” to locate the settings in Henry Dumas’, Ralph Ellison’s, and Richard Wright’s stories. Confirm whether Dumas conveys an attitude of engagement; Ellison one of disillusionment; Wright one of apprehension; and Rudolph Fisher one of bewildered amazement and hope.

2. A descriptive essay/narrative yields a word-portrait of a person, place, or thing. Writers of descriptive essays or narratives are *exact* “wordsmiths.” As the realist painter or the photographer captures his or her subjects either in paints or with the camera, so must the exact “wordsmith” capture his or her subject in words. While the painter’s or the photographer’s work is immediate, the portrait in the descriptive essay is in process -- in process until the essay has been read and understood. And that is done by revealing the image in stages. Excellent examples of a descriptive essay is “**The African Prisoners**” (“Reader,” 246) and Alain LeRoy Locke’s seminal essay “**The New Negro**” (“Reader,” 179).

Description is used by writers as a means to undergird other forms of writing or as a dominant writing strategy. For instance, Morrison uses description to paint a scene in the excerpt from *Beloved* (“Reader,” 2f.). In an expository piece, Stephen Jay Gould *describes* in the introductory statement of his essay “**American Polygeny and Craniometry before Darwin: Blacks and Indians as Separate, Inferior Species,**” (“Reader,” 338) the steps he will take to address how biological justification was used in the past and even today to impose “the additional burden of intrinsic inferiority” upon despised groups of the human race. Yet another example of the use of description is the petitioner’s evidence in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (“Reader,” 102). The volume of description depends on the writer’s goal and the audience for whom the essay has been written.

There are two types of descriptive essays: one which provides factual information about a topic. e.g., an encyclopedic entry, and one which provides a purely subjective depiction, e.g., how racial prejudice affects the author or an audience. Yet, there are examples which employ factual as well as impressionistic depictions. Such an example is Toni Morrison's **On the Backs of Blacks** ("Reader," 240f.). Here the author cites the effects of "race talk" and provides an impressionistic depiction of "race talk" and its impact on America, i.e., how "race talk" permeates the visual medium on which America depends for "facts" and how, in Morrison's opinion, "race talk" and the "surrender to whiteness" facilitated former President George Bush's campaign use of Willie Horton and President Bill Clinton's similar use of Sister Souljah. For, according to Morrison, these campaign uses were obligatory responses "to the demands of a contentious electorate unable to understand itself in any terms other than race. Warring interests, nationalities and classes can be merged with the greatest economy under that racial banner."

Indeed, descriptions are used by writers of fiction to reveal through their observations details of a scene as a fixed and sometimes as a participatory observer. And the writers of descriptive essays or narratives use these strategies to accomplish what Joseph Conrad maintained is the purpose of his writing: "My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel – it is, before all, to make you *see* . That -- and no more, and it is everything." A fine example of the use of fictional description to make one hear, feel, and see is Henry Dumas' **"Goodbye, Sweetwater"** ("Reader," 501).

3. The process/analysis essay provides a prescribed "menu," the ingredients of which, if followed or analyzed properly or understood well, will yield the writer's desired result. How is that done? First, the writer is called upon to separate the individual steps, e.g. the selection of ingredients, the appliances needed, etc. Second, the writer provides a step-by-step movement of the process. Third, the writer interprets the function of each movement and its relationship to the other movements.

The purpose of the process/analysis essay is to provide instruction and information. Instruction enables the reader to perform a task, e.g., how to tie a tie; information addresses a reader's curiosity about the procedures necessary to accomplish a task which he or she might not be able to perform, e.g., "building" a university, e.g., Du Bois' **"The Field and Function of the Negro College"** (s. "Reader," 130); Mordecai Wyatt Johnson's **"Inaugural Address,"** delivered in 1927 ("Reader," 146); and H. Patrick Swygert's **"Challenges, Change, and the Future of Howard University"** ("Reader," 163). Du Bois' **"The Position of the Negro in the American Social Order: Where Do We Go from Here?"** ("Reader," 3) and Ralph J. Bunche's **"The Programs of Organizations Devoted to the Improvement of the Status of the American Negro"** ("Reader," 389) provide excellent examples in which the strategies of overview, sequence of steps, examples, and results are used to organize an effective process/analysis essay.

4. In the **comparison essay**, the author demonstrates how things, views, or issues are similar. In the **contrast essay**, the author proceeds to demonstrate how things, views, or issues are different. Both types of essays involve the juxtaposing of elements. The comparison and contrast essay organizes the process of comparison into a plan for analyzing and evaluating the points of similarity and difference between two or among three or more things.

Such an intellectual process is undertaken by Amiri Baraka in a series of essays (s. "Reader," 207-218), as he seeks to contrast the African's and the Euro-American's "version of human existence." An essay which combines the strategies of comparison and contrast is Ethan Watters' "**Claude Steele Has Scores to Settle**" ("Reader," 354). In it Watters explores Shelby Steele's definition of "racial vulnerability" and Claude Steele's definition of "stereotype vulnerability" and how the brothers' ideas diverge over the "questions of who is responsible for the predicament" of what, many maintain, is the poor academic performance of African Americans.

5. The purpose of other essays is to set boundaries for and describe the essential nature of something, to give the special qualities which identify an object, process, or concept. These essays may distinguish that object, process, or concept from others which may be similar and are commonly called **definition essays**. The essay might be *lexical* in nature, specifying the class into which one may place an item. It might be *stipulating* in nature, defining the restrictions on a term so that the reader will understand how it will be used in the discussion. And yet, the essay might be *extended* in nature, expanding on and illustrating in detail a concept or theory.

Writers use **definition essays** to identify the special nature of an institution, theory, philosophy, or group of people. The **definition essay** is also used to explain, as Ronald Walters does in his essay "**Black Politics and Democratic Theory: 'Two Unreconciled Strivings'**" ("Reader," 408). Here he explores how black politics and democratic theory are "two unreconciled strivings." The **definition essay** also attempts to persuade, as Alain LeRoy Locke does in his essay "**Ethics of Culture**" ("Reader," 186), how a people can attain greatness. In the essay, Locke provides a "road map" for the educated, young, African-American elite of the 1920s. In providing a "road map" to the acquisition of "culture," Locke employs a strategy often used in **definition essays**, namely one of example. One will note that Locke cites not only examples of the handicaps which impede African-American students from becoming "cultured," but examples of strategies which would facilitate their becoming "cultured." Having assessed in the essay the version of the world from his unique perspective and the state of African American in this nation, Locke concludes: "If, as we all know, we must look to education largely to win our way, we must look largely to *culture* (my *emphasis*) to win our just reward and recognition."

6. What would America be like without African Americans? The answer to this question is what Ralph Ellison pursues in his essay "**What America Would Be Like Without Blacks**" ("Reader," 225). This essay is an excellent example of **cause and effect writing**. In addition to imparting information and

education, **cause and effect writing** can permit the writer to engage in speculation. What if? Here the writer can hypothesize about the factors which might bring about an event or the consequences of certain actions. Ellison explores in his essay the African American's contributions to the nation and demonstrates graphically how "soulless" the nation would be, if it were bereft of the tension which, as a result of the African American's presence as well as his quest for emancipation and civil rights, forged the nation's creative spirit and image of itself. For Ellison says: "Materially, psychologically and culturally, part of the nation's heritage is Negro American, and whatever it becomes will be shaped in part by the Negro's presence."

In her Charter Day speech at Howard University ("Reader," 160), Noble Laureate Toni Morrison employs causal analysis, creating an horrific scenario ("Reader," 161f.) to remind us of ever-present racism in America, of fascist ideology, of what has happened and is happening to demonize and dehumanize a race of people and, in the process, produce "the perfect capitalist, one who is willing to kill a human being for a product – a pair of sneakers, a jacket, a car"

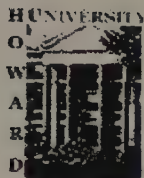
7. One then wonders why Morrison has shared with us this grisly food for thought. In the honored tradition of **persuasion and argument**, Morrison attempts to convince us to consider seriously what she has presented *and* to take action. First, in reciting her relationship to Howard, she establishes a kinship with the audience. Having succeeded in embracing the audience, she announces clearly her assertion, her argument: "The vocabulary of our [African Americans'] current dispossession has changed, but its desirability, in certain quarters, has not changed. . . . Let us be reminded that before there is a final solution, there must be a first solution, a second one, even a third. The move toward a final solution is not a jump. It takes one step, then another." Morrison taps the vocabulary of Nazi Germany with her reference to the "final solution" (Endlösung) which the Nazis devised to "resolve the Jewish problem" during World War II. In her presentation, Morrison incorporates emotional appeal, employing connotative language ("final solution" and "When our fears have all been serialized, our creativity censured, our ideals 'marketplaced,' our rights sold, our intelligence sloganized, our strength downsized, our privacy auctioned") which taps the audience's feeling and elicits its reaction. Using the strategies of causal analysis which were cited above, Morrison appeals then to the audience's intelligence and reason. Morrison's stature as a Nobel Laureate, the national and international reach of her talent and wisdom, all buttress the ethical appeal of her remarks. Having presented her "case," buttressed it with evidence and reason, and appealed to her audience's intelligence and emotions, Morrison trumpets the clarion call to action: "Every discipline, every department, every program: the natural sciences -- in an age when we are still, once again, defending or explaining the absence of a defense for racial and genetic inferiority; the humanities, while we witness the degradation of scholarship -- our scholarship and our artists; law; the social sciences; -- all have to be involved, as it has always been at this University, in that debate. This is life and death."

CONCLUSION

Demonstrated in the "Reader" and throughout the Study Guides is how language can be shaped to bridge understanding among us. In this world where *image* seeks to become knowledge, we who "do" language reject *image's* provocation and *its* eclipse. Language, in the "right" hands, has, as Morrison states in her Nobel Lecture in Literature (1993), the "ability to limn the actual, imagined and possible lives of its speakers, readers, writers It arcs toward the place where meaning may lie." We all must avoid the misuse of language -- language which encourages, "even mandate[s] surrender" and erect with language bridges which give us access to one another, to knowledge. For, as Morrison says in her Nobel lecture, "[u]nmolested language surges toward knowledge, not its destruction."

In this section of the Study Guides, we have explored how language is shaped and used -- used to define, describe, analyze, persuade, argue for and against something, evaluate, inform, and educate. It is all that we have, and it is all that we are. See how it has been treated.

**For the definitions of the categories of writing, I am indebted to Joseph Trimmer and Maxine Hairston, editors of The Riverside Reader (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1983, 1996) and Dr. Enid E. Bogle, Director, The Graduate Expository Writing Program, The Graduate School, Howard University.*



College of Arts and Sciences
Washington D.C. 20059



Syllabus

"Freshman Seminar," which is offered *only* in the fall semester of every academic year, is essentially a mentoring program which offers new entrants, among other things, opportunities to explore the personal and institutional history of Howard University, as well as the intellectual and artistic characteristics which have defined and define still the African-American tradition of response. The required text and a resource tool for your entire tenure at the University, *A Howard Reader*, is an anthology of essays and creative works which resonate the cultural and intellectual heritage of the African American. It makes available to you many works which represent the bedrock of the African-American experience. It bridges the past and the present; recites the African American's arduous journey across the Middle Passage to the Americas and their lives here; confirms the African American's contribution to the Nation; and, most important, provides opportunities to you to sample and, eventually, grapple with a number of great works of thought and literature. During the semester, you and your faculty mentor will use the *Reader* as a springboard for class discussions of the 20th century as seen through the critically focused lenses of the singular African-American experience. You will dialogue informally about how the African American perceived and perceives, reacted and reacts to, influenced and influences still the intellectual, artistic, and spiritual life of the Nation, as well as its principles of justice, freedom, government. Your mentor has volunteered to conduct your Freshman Seminar section and to mentor you during your tenure in the College. You may turn to him or her at any time with your problems and concerns.

Time-frame:

The Freshman Seminar in the College of Arts and Sciences will be conducted by your faculty mentor during the fall semester.

Some Responsibilities of Seminar Participants:

1. Regular and prompt attendance. Your participation is essential to the successful completion of the course requirements.
2. Maintain a Double-Entry Journal into which you will enter the ideas, assertions, and arguments found in your assigned readings that, you find, reveal the intent of the author. These notes on the text are the first half of the Double-Entry Journal. The second entry in the Double-Entry Journal explains the personal and sub-textual significance of the passage and responds to that passage. In this way, you will engage in a dialogue with the text, exploring your reactions to the reading assignments and those of your classmates gleaned from classroom discussions. This technique provides the mentor and you detailed feedback on how you read, analyze, and respond to the assigned readings. The Double-Entry Journal will be examined periodically during the semester by your mentor and represents a significant portion of your final grade. Prepare and submit in a timely manner all required assignments.
3. Prepare and submit to your mentor a work and study schedule for the first semester.
4. Prepare and be able to recite from memory the answers for the "Howard IQ."
5. Visit an academic department (not the department of your major) and obtain information about its program and offerings.
6. Attend the University's Opening Convocation.
7. Make a brief presentation on a cultural event which you attended.
8. Read and discuss the following "core" texts found in *A Howard Reader: An Intellectual and Cultural Quilt of the African-American Experience* :

Rayford W. Logan, "The Supreme Court and the Negro";

W. E. B. Du Bois, "The Position of the Negro in American Social Order: Where Do We Go from Here?"; "The Talented Tenth";

Ralph J. Bunche, "The Programs of Organizations Devoted to the Improvement of the Status of the American Negro";

Alain Locke, "The New Negro";

Carter G. Woodson, "Understand the Negro";

E. Franklin Frazier, "Behind the Masks";

Martin Luther King Jr., *Letter from Birmingham Jail*;

James Baldwin, "Stranger in the Village";

Ralph Ellison, "What America Would Be Like Without Blacks";

Manning Marable, "Black America in Search of Itself";

bell hooks, "Revolutionary Black Woman: Making Ourselves Subject";

Brown v. Board of Education

Michael R. Winston, "James Madison Nabrit, Jr.";

Toni Cade Bambara, "Deep Sight and Rescue Missions."

Additional reading assignments from the text and other sources may be given by your mentor.

10. Obtain an e-mail address.

Outcomes Assessment

To evaluate and elicit feedback on student learning, your mentor will ask you to participate in a number of important assessment activities. You will be asked to complete Minute Papers at the end of each class. You will be asked to respond to the following questions: (1) What, you thought, was the most important thing you learned during the class period?; and (2) Which important question remains unanswered for you?

The goals of the Minute Papers are to help you (1) develop the ability to synthesize and integrate the ideas expressed in the texts that will inform your understanding of the authors' intent; (2) develop the ability to think holistically, to see the whole as well as the parts; (3) improve your skills at paying attention; (4) develop the ability to concentrate; (5) improve your listening skills; and 6) develop appropriate study skills.

Having successfully completed Freshman Seminar, you will be able to recite biographical information on some of the major African-American "voices" of the 19th and 20th centuries, e.g., Frederick Douglass; W. E. B. Du Bois; Booker T. Washington; Carter G. Woodson; Alain LeRoy Locke; Paul Laurence Dunbar; Langston Hughes; Zora Neale Hurston; E. Franklin Frazier; Albert Murray; John Hope Franklin; James Baldwin; Toni Morrison; bell hooks; Ralph Ellison; Richard Wright; Sterling A. Brown; Cornel West; Rayford W. Logan; James M. Nabrit Jr.; Ralph J. Bunche; Ernest Everett Just, among others.

Additionally, you will be able to define the importance of the following documents to the African-American experience: The Federalist Papers; Declaration of Independence; The Bill of Rights and Amendments; Articles of the Constitution of the United States referring to slavery and the rights of slaves; The Emancipation Proclamation; Dred Scott Decision; Plessy v. Ferguson; Brown v. Board of Education; *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, among others. You will be able to provide accurate information on the following institutions and/or organizations: Howard University; the Freedmen's Bureau; NAACP; Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, among others.

Having read critically the assignments and participated fully in the class discussions, you will be able to prepare and submit an essay entitled "The 20th Century through the African-American Perspective" – one which will begin, for example, with a discussion of Rayford Logan's recitation of the hurdles which impeded the civil rights of the African American at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries and Du Bois' position on the so-called "Talented Tenth." You might wish to include in your essay your understanding of the Civil Rights Movement, having read Howell Raines' "Grady's Gift"; Milton Viorst's "E. D. Nixon"; and, of course, King's *Letter from Birmingham Jail*. A contemporary assessment of the African-American's state can be found in Toni Morrison's Charter Day Address and essay "On the Backs of Blacks"; Cornel West's "Learning to Talk of Race"; Claude Steele's "Black Students Live Down to Expectations"; Shelby Steele's "Affirmative Action: The Price of Preference"; Robert D. Bullard's "Anatomy of Environmental Racism and the Environmental Justice Movement"; and Toni Cade Bambara's "Deep Sight and Rescue Mission."

Grading:

The successful completion of Freshman Seminar is a requirement for graduation. Based on your performance, class attendance and participation, and written assignments, you will be assigned a grade of "A," "B," "C," "D," or "F." If you receive a grade of "F," you must repeat the course as either a sophomore, junior, or senior.

Assemblies:

Four Seminar-assemblies are being planned. Additional information on those assemblies will be provided at a later date. One will explore study abroad opportunities; the other will provide you information on careers. Your mentor will inform you of the times and places of the assemblies.

Required Texts:

1. *A Howard Reader: An Intellectual and Cultural Quilt of the African-American Experience* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Custom Publishing, 1997), edited by Paul E. Logan with a Foreword by H. Patrick Swygert, President, Howard University.

2. *Freshman Seminar Workbook and Planner* by Ethel Lewis and Paul E. Logan.

Your mentor and you will also read and discuss weekly important new items which appear in either *The Washington Post* or *The New York Times*.

Coordinator of the Freshman Orientation Program:

Dr. Paul E. Logan is coordinator of the Freshman Seminar Program. His office is located in The Howard Center, Room 403.



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INTRODUCTION

Chapter One presents reading selections which reveal how African Americans have confronted worlds of unusual circumstances; how they have deconstructed, constructed, and remodeled those worlds and placed onto them indelible stamps of ownership; how their spirits, albeit under enormous and seemingly relentless pressure, soared and made known their humanity and intellect. And yet, there is also evidence which gives historical context to periods in our people's lives when they have been called upon to define who they are. The needle of this section loops the pieces together, stitching W. E. B. Du Bois' essay—one which relates his assessment of the African-American community in 1939 and charts the direction African Americans should take in order to achieve their rightful place in the world of democracy—to the excerpted essay from the seminal work *Mis-education of the Negro*, "Understand the Negro," in which Carter G. Woodson calls upon African Americans to break the chains of misinformation, to erase the portraiture of them which "others" have painted, as well as to develop and accept what he terms as "The New Program." Du Bois' essay also arches to Ralph J. Bunche's essay, "The Programs of Organizations Devoted to the Improvement of the Status of the American Negro" also published in 1939 and reprinted in Chapter Seven.

"A VISIT TO THE SLAVE MOTHER WHO KILLED HER CHILD."

The Chapter literally begins with a defining moment recorded on February 12, 1856, in the *American Baptist* : **"The Slave Mother Who Killed Her Child."** It is the true story of Margaret Garner whose name is not mentioned in the article, but who, having been taken back into slavery, made a number of attempts to kill herself and her children.

For what could this be expression? What could have "pushed" this mother into killing her child?

One would certainly have to understand the system which provided a forum for such an act. Certainly, one would have to compare/contrast this act with/to the one revealed in the authentic slave lullaby found in Chapter Nine.

TONI MORRISON, FROM *BELOVED* .

Nobel Laureate Toni Morrison was deeply moved by the *American Baptist* -article which is reprinted in *The Black Book* -- a book which she, as staff editor for Random House, edited and which was published in 1974. Morrison used that mother's act as a centerpiece for her Pulitzer-Prize-Award-winning novel *Beloved* . As a matter of fact, an appropriate selection from the novel has been juxtaposed next to the *American Baptist* -article to demonstrate how the novelist's creative process enlivened a somewhat mundane report of the mother's act, out of which another more substantial idea grew. And this substantial idea is the African Americans' ability to understand and to know the world, its perceptions, its ideas of good and evil, and to achieve the ability to bear witness to the deconstruction of those worlds in which they have been undefined and to the construction of worlds in which they find definition. Such an achievement can be found in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* . If we accept the premise that enslavement of the African American in the United States is the watershed in human history, that it is, according to John Reilly, professor of English at Howard University, that single event which "fostered the discourse of modernity, of which literature is a part," then we understand the importance of Morrison's *Beloved* and its place in the American literary canon. It is not, however, as some have suggested, a "clunky ghost" story; it is the greatest commemorative story of the African-American past. In an interview with Elsie B. Washington in 1987, Morrison stated that in *Beloved* she was "trying to explore how a people—in this case one individual or a small group of individuals—absorbs and rejects information on a very personal level about something [slavery] that is indigestible and unabsorbable, completely. Something that has no precedent in the history of the world, in terms of length of time and the nature and specificity of its devastation." Confronted by the notion that the enslaved had no value only a price—"no value in the white world" (Morrison), they deconstructed that "white world" and constructed one in which they had value and power, one in which they have a sense of community. And it is this experience which Morrison fleshes out through almost every character.

It was then Morrison's task, through this woman, whom she calls Sethe, and her relatives—through these human beings—to put into relief, to *remember for us* the enslavement of African Americans and recount, through their personal stories, the effect of the institution of slavery on them and how they, in responding to it, repossessed themselves. It is through the child Beloved that she remembers, names, and “voices” all those “unburied, or at least uncereemoniously buried people” and make them “literate in art” (Morrison). It is the historical break between enslavement and emancipation that Morrison has used to present in *Beloved* characters whose “disjunctured” lives, albeit pressured to the extreme, moved gracefully and creatively in worlds which they created.

Toni Morrison was born Chloe Anthony Wofford on February 18, 1931, in Lorain, Ohio. She attended Howard University and was awarded the Bachelor of Arts degree in 1953, having majored in English and minored in classics (the literature and culture of ancient Rome and Greece). In 1955 she received the Master of Arts degree from Cornell University and began immediately to pursue a career in teaching at Texas Southern University in Houston, Texas. Morrison remained there until 1957, at which time she returned to *alma mater*, teaching English composition and humanities in the College of Liberal Arts (now the College of Arts and Sciences) until 1964. From 1965 until 1985, Morrison was senior editor at Random House in New York, and it was during the time at Random House that she published her first novel, *The Bluest Eye* (1970), and subsequently, *Sula* (1973), *Song of Solomon* (1977), and *Tar Baby* (1981). Also during this period, Morrison was associate professor of English at State University of New York at Purchase (1971-72) and occupied the Albert Schweitzer Chair in the Humanities at State University of New York (SUNY) at Albany (1984-1989). Her play *Dreaming Emmett*, albeit still unpublished, was written and performed while she was at SUNY-Albany. Morrison is presently the Robert F. Goheen Professor in the Council of the Humanities at Princeton University—a chair which she has held since 1989. Her most recent novel, *Paradise*, has, like all of her other creative ventures, won critical acclaim.

W. E. B. DU BOIS, “THE POSITION OF THE NEGRO IN THE AMERICAN SOCIAL ORDER: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?”

Our third selection was penned by **W. E. B. Du Bois**. Du Bois was born on February 23, 1868, in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. Having been awarded the A.B. degree by Fisk University, Du Bois returned to Massachusetts where he earned the Master of Arts degree from Harvard University. Subsequently, he spent two years at the University of Berlin (Germany), after which he returned to Massachusetts to become the first African American to earn the Ph.D. degree from Harvard University. He pursued a career in teaching at Wilberforce University, the University of Pennsylvania, and Atlanta University. Constantly combining academic pursuits with his work for the civil rights of African Americans, Du Bois became the most respected, effective, and, sometimes, controversial spokesman for his people in the decades prior to the First World War. The “clarion-caller” of the “Niagara Movement,” which merged later to become the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Du Bois saw as the organization's objective an aggressive posture on behalf of “Negro freedom and growth.” Although Du Bois could not reconcile the NAACP's being led by liberal whites, he remained as the editor-in-chief of the organization's

magazine *Crisis* -- a position which he held for almost twenty-five years. It was through *Crisis*, which had achieved tremendous national success, that Du Bois launched sometimes scathing assaults on the injustices suffered by African Americans.

At the end of the First World War and the signing of the Armistice, Du Bois traveled to France in 1919 to represent the NAACP as an observer at the Peace Conference. While there, he organized a Pan-African conference, the goal of which was to address fully the problems of Africans in the Diaspora. Given the paucity of interests of major Black organizations, the idea initially failed; however, Du Bois was more successful in 1921. But that conference did not achieve the objectives which Du Bois set out to accomplish, and then there was Marcus Garvey who seemed to have captured the attention and imagination of countless African Americans with his Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) and his desire to unite Africans in the Diaspora with Africa. At first, Du Bois belittled and ignored the Garvey-movement, but it was difficult to continue to do so. Of course, the white press "played up" the conflict between Garvey and Du Bois, and it was this unwelcomed press coverage which weakened support for future Pan-African conferences. As a matter of fact, Du Bois held yet another conference in 1923; however, the attendance was small. At the conclusion of that conference, Du Bois traveled to Africa. Upon his return, Du Bois had to turn away from some of his earlier views relative to the role of the "Talented Tenth," namely that a black elite could be created to achieve social equality for African Americans by winning the respect of the powerful educated white establishment. Dramatically, Du Bois withdrew his support of integration as a short-term goal, expressed great distrust of white politicians and "white" capitalism, and encouraged vigorously African-American investment in a segregated socialized economy—ideas which are expressed cogently in **"The Position of the Negro in the American Social Order: Where Do We Go from Here?"**

Frustrated by the slow pace of winning civil rights for the African American and in protest of the NAACP's accommodation with white society, Du Bois resigned from that organization in 1934. A constant defender of his people, as well as educator and a fierce agitator for their rights, Du Bois became eventually disillusioned with life in the West and announced in 1961 that he had joined the Communist Party. He emigrated to Accra, Ghana, where, at the age of 93, he died.

CARTER G. WOODSON, "UNDERSTAND THE NEGRO" AND "THE NEW PROGRAM."

Carter G. Woodson's essays, **"Understand the Negro"** and **"The New Program,"** complement in many respects the above-referenced essay by Du Bois. Woodson, too, calls upon the African American to be more self-reliant, to free himself from the shackles of what he often called "mis-education," and to develop curricula of study which would explore the identity of the African American, his contributions, as well as those of all Africans, to civilization and to develop ways to improve their plight. The son of former slaves, Woodson was born on December 19, 1875, in Buckingham County, Virginia. Unable to attend school because he had to help his parents on the farm, Woodson was largely self-taught, mastering the fundamentals of the primary subjects by the age of seventeen. In 1897 he succeeded in completing all the requirements for the high school diploma at Douglass High School in Huntington, West Virginia, to which

he and his brother had gone in order to further their education. In 1901 he received a teacher's high school certificate for the Huntington schools, and 1903 the degree of Litt. B. from Berea College in Kentucky. Subsequently, he assumed a position as supervisor of schools in the Philippines. Having returned to the United States, Woodson received the degree of Bachelor of Arts from the University of Chicago in 1907 and the Master of Arts in 1908. While teaching in the public schools in the District of Columbia, he completed his doctoral dissertation, and in 1912 he received the Ph.D. degree from Harvard University.

In light of the glaring omission of the contributions of the African American to American culture from history books and curricula of most institutions of higher learning, Woodson decided to dedicate his life to conducting and encouraging others to conduct research on African-American life and history. To that end, he founded the Association for the Study of Negro (now Afro-American) Life and History, Inc., which has its headquarters in Washington, D. C. Out of that Association have come two important scholarly publications, *Journal of Negro History* and the *Negro History Bulletin*, which provide forums for the investigation of the life and history of the African American. Among his many publications is the seminal book *The Mis-education of the Negro* which was published in 1933. As mentioned earlier in this Study Guide, the Woodson-essays in this *Reader* were excerpted from *The Mis-education of the Negro*. That book is a deliberative, definitive, and constructive exploration of the American educational system, its deleterious and, often debilitating, impact on the African American. Because much has not changed in the primary and secondary schools of this nation relative to the history of the African American, Woodson's book remains as relevant today—thirty-eight years after his death—as it was in 1933. Like Du Bois, Woodson expressed dismay and deep concern that the American educational system had failed the African-American child, denying him/her the truth of his/her ancestors' contributions to world history, thus robbing him/her of self-confidence, self-respect, and identity.

E. FRANKLIN FRAZIER, "INTRODUCTION" AND "BEHIND THE MASKS."

The issue of identity, "self-revelation," is the topic of **E. Franklin Frazier's** still controversial book *Black Bourgeoisie*. One of the studies in the collection *Recherches en Sciences Humaines, Bourgeoisie Noire* first appeared in France and was published in Paris 1955. The English edition did not appear until 1957.

Frazier was born in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1894 and died in 1962. An honor graduate of Howard University, Frazier began his teaching career as an instructor of mathematics at Tuskegee Institute. In 1920 he received the degree of Master of Arts from Clark University and in 1931 the Ph.D. degree from the University of Chicago. Having taught sociology and African studies at Morehouse College from 1922 until 1924, Frazier became director of the Atlanta School of Social Work—a position which he held until 1927. From 1931 until 1934, Frazier was on the faculty of Fisk University from which he resigned to become professor of sociology and Chairman of the Department of Sociology at Howard University. Among his numerous awards are the Guggenheim Fellowship, the John Anisfield Award, and the MacIver Award of the American Sociological Association for his analysis of the "black bourgeoisie."

The selections which appear in the *Reader* are the **"Introduction"** and a sub-chapter ("Self-Hatred and Guilt Feelings") from the chapter entitled **"Behind the Masks."** The "Introduction" is an encapsulated history of the African in America, his enslavement and emancipation, as well as the hurdles over which he had to jump. "Self-Hatred and Guilt Feelings" "reveals" the black middle-class and attempts to expel them from their world of make-believe—a world of material things which were (are) most gratifying to sustain and least troublesome to maintain.

In the Preface of the 1962-edition, Frazier maintains that the book "showed that slavery was a cruel and barbaric system that annihilated the Negro as a person, a fact which has been well-documented. . . . Moreover, the book also showed how, since Emancipation, Negroes had been outsiders in American society. Finally, it demonstrated on the basis of factual knowledge that Negroes were not only at the bottom of the economic ladder but all the pretended economic gains which Negroes were supposed to have made had not changed fundamentally their relative economic position in American life. It revealed also that the new Negro middle-class was comprised almost entirely of wage earners and salaried professionals and that so-called Negro business enterprises amounted to practically nothing in the American economy. This was not, of course, the image of Negroes that white Americans wanted to present to the world, especially at a time when they were endeavoring to win the confidence and friendship of the colored world." To questions often posed about whether the economic position of the African American had changed and whether middle-class African Americans, comfortable now with their new prosperity, had abandoned conspicuous consumption, Frazier responded in 1962 that nothing had changed relative to the size of the middle-class, their occupational status, and the source of their income. "The essential fact is that they," wrote Frazier, "still do not own any of the real wealth of America or play an important role in American business."

FRANTZ FANON, "BY WAY OF CONCLUSION."

On the heels of Frazier's essays comes the essay **"By Way of Conclusion"** which closes **Frantz Fanon's** remarkable first book *Black Face, White Mask* (1952). Fanon was born in 1925 in the French colony Guadeloupe where it is said that he received a conventional colonial education. In 1943 he left Guadeloupe and went to France where he volunteered to fight in the resistance movement Free French in the First World War. It was in Lyon, France, subsequent to the War, that Fanon pursued a program of study in medicine and psychiatry. Eventually, Fanon became in 1953 Head of the Department of Psychiatry at the Blinda-Joinville Hospital in French-occupied Algeria where he witnessed and supported the Algerian struggle for independence from France. In 1961 Fanon died of leukemia at the age of 36 at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland.

It is indeed interesting that the essays by Frazier and Fanon address the unique situation of the African in the Diaspora. In America, the black bourgeoisie, virtually denied any access to and alienated from the larger society and viewed by that society as inferior, created one in which it could feel superior. Having been educated in the French system and "colonized" by the language of France, Fanon believed himself to be French. However, that perception changed after his first encounter with French racism. He also felt a

kind of alienation. While Frazier explores in his book the black middle-class alienation from a "healthy" self, Fanon refers in his essay to something similar, and that something is what he calls an "intellectual alienation"—one which is a creation of middle-class society: "Middle-class society is any society that becomes rigidified in predetermined forms, forbidding all evolution, all gains, all progress, all discovery." According to Fanon, middle-class is a closed society "in which life has no tastes, in which the air is tainted, in which ideas and men are corrupt." While, according to Frazier, the black bourgeoisie's response to alienation has been one of escape into the world of make-believe, Fanon recommends a move to "disalienation"—a way out of the darkness of alienation which has been imposed by the West. This disalienation can be achieved through the individual's coming to terms with "self": "to recapture the self and to scrutinize the self."

MANNING MARABLE, "BLACK AMERICA IN SEARCH OF ITSELF."

An interesting arch is one observed in this Chapter. In 1939 Du Bois assessed the state of black America and a possible promise for its realizing its rightful place in the world of democracy. In 1995 – more than fifty years later—**Manning Marable** holds up a revealing mirror to the state of black America in his book *Beyond Black and White*, from which "**Black America in Search of Itself**" is taken. Marable is a professor of history and political science as well as the Director of the Institute for Research in African-American Studies at Columbia University. A contributor to more than 275 newspapers and commentator on more than 80 radio stations in the United States and abroad, Marable is presently writing and researching a biography on Malcolm X and collaborating with anthropologist Leith Mullings on a new book entitled *Race, Inequality and Power*.

In the essay "Black America in Search of Itself," Marable has placed a finger on the pulse of black America and, among other things, its evolving relationship with Jewish America, American justice and fairness in terms of education and employment. In mapping out what black America must do in order to survive spiritually and economically, Marable maintains that African Americans can "find value in [their] culture and heritage without fostering negative stereotypes and myths about other ethnic groups. [African Americans] can express [themselves] ethnically without resorting to the false discourse and rationales of race." Thus, "[i]n the process, [they] will discover the proverbial promised land of full equality and economic equity can be achieved, but only in concert with other groups of the oppressed" Additionally, Marable explores, as did his predecessors Du Bois, Woodson, Frazier, and Fanon, those things which have denied the true "realization" of the African American and how those things have made him/her hostage to his/her own "ideological demands." Finally, holding up a mirror of what America was and is relative to the African American, Marable outlines the measures pursued and enacted to right past discrimination and unequal treatment under the law.

WALT HARRINGTON, "HOW CAN ANYONE DO ANYTHING ELSE?" AND "IS THE DEATH PENALTY FAIR?"

Although there are laws on the books which provide protection for minorities against discrimination and unequal treatment, there is still today glaring examples of the breakdown of the rule of law in America.

Walt Harrington, in his narrative portrait of **Bryan Stevenson**, provides a singular example of how one man, who rejected the materialism and greed inherent in the American political economy and secular society, had dedicated his life to representing African-American death-row inmates in Alabama. Prior to Harrington's becoming professor of journalism at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, he had a distinguished and award-winning career as a writer for *The Washington Post*. Harrington's essay on Bryan Stevenson originally appeared in *The Washington Post Magazine* and is reprinted in the *Reader*.

Bryan Stevenson lives indeed an extraordinary life; it is a way of being which is an embodiment of Fanon's man—one "who has contributed to the victory of the dignity of [the] spirit . . . who has said no to an attempt to subjugate his fellows"—one who demands "human behavior from the other" and exacts a response to the inhumanity of the other. According to Harrington, Stevenson's "deepest mission . . . is not to save the lives of convicted men, but to live in such a way that his own life is a question posed to others." Stevenson is, using the words of Fanon, his "own foundation." In defining the genius and creative spirit of "Duke" Ellington in his essay "**Storiella Americana as She is Swyung; or, the Blues as Representative Anecdote,**" **Albert Murray** maintains that Ellington's musical statements are the musical equivalents "to what Kenneth Burke calls the representative anecdote, the effect of which is to summarize a basic attitude toward experience; or a given outlook on life." So one can also maintain that Stevenson's quests on behalf of his fellowman are "representative anecdotes" which summarize all that America represents and says it is: fair, just, and compassionate.

As one has observed in the "ways of being" in this chapter, it has been a matter of what the African American does/has done with the hand that has been dealt or what the African American proposes/has proposed to be the prescriptions for the cure for "alienation." In the essay by Albert Murray, which was cited above, one journeys into an exploration of the life and work of "Duke" Ellington—into his way of being.

ALBERT MURRAY, "STORIELLA AMERICANA AS SHE IS SWYUNG; OR, THE BLUES AS REPRESENTATIVE ANECDOTE."

Critic, novelist, and biographer, Murray was born in Nokomis, Alabama, in 1916. Having majored in English at Tuskegee Institute, where he, by the way, befriended novelist and essayist Ralph Ellison, he completed a year of graduate studies at New York University and began teaching at Tuskegee and directing its theater. It was not until 1962, when he retired from the United States Air Force as a major at the age of 46, that Murray began to pursue seriously his vocation as a critic, essayist, and novelist. Robert Coles of *The New Yorker* magazine praises his creative gifts and says that Murray "is possessed of the poet's language, the novelist's sensibility, the essayist's clarity, the jazzman's imagination, the gospel singer's depth of feeling."

In "Storiella Americana . . .," Murray reveals for us racist Washington, D. C., -- the city of Woodrow Wilson—which existed during Ellington's formative years, as well as the impact of the Howard-thinkers (Kelly Miller, Alain LeRoy Locke, Carter G. Woodson) on black consciousness at the beginning of the 20th

century and the Howard Theatre on the development of Ellington's creative genius. Like so many African Americans, Ellington played beautifully and gracefully the sometimes deplorable hand that was dealt. In the music and composition Ellington sought and found freedom. Murray writes that Ellington, fully cognizant of the technicolor of racist America, "took [it] for granted much the same as the fairy tale princes and dukes of derring-do take the existence of the dragon (grand or not) for granted. Also like the fairy tale hero that he was by way of becoming, he seems to have been far too preoccupied with getting help to forge his magic sword (or magic means) to spend much time complaining about the injustice of the existence of the dragon. *Dispatching the dragon, after all, as devastating as dragons are, has always been only incidental to gaining the ultimate boon to which the dragon denies you access.*"

BELL HOOKS, "REVOLUTIONARY BLACK WOMEN: MAKING OURSELVES SUBJECT."

bell hooks also takes up the theme of "being" in her essay "**Revolutionary Black Women: Making Ourselves Subject**" and, in so doing, begins to put the finishing touches on this "patch" of the quilt. Born Gloria Jean Watkins in Kentucky in 1952, she adopted the name "bell hooks" from her great-grandmother. hooks is a very outspoken and prolific feminist scholar, poet, and social critic whose deconstructive analyses of race and gender as well as her advocacy of black feminism have brought her into the forefront of the contemporary social criticism and the black consciousness movement. Presently, hooks is a member of the Department of English at City College in New York City, having completed a stint as a teacher of women's studies at Oberlin College (1988-1993). Her essay published in the *Reader* is a call to arms for black women, a call, as was Fanon's essay a call for the African in the Diaspora, to decolonize the mind and to develop "critical consciousness." Additionally, the essay is an explorative analysis of black womanhood *in process*, allowing hooks to explore her own perceptions of how black women writers have grappled with the concept of sisterhood and black feminism and how "the hand that was dealt" has influenced and determined the shape of that sisterhood—how, in short, they became the direct object of life's sentence. hooks, in her analyses of works by Audre Lorde, Alice Walker, Toni Morrison, Toni Cade Bambara, Zora Neale Hurston, and Paule Marshall, as well as the lives of Shirley Chisholm and Angela Davis, proffers insights into how black women struggled and succeeded in moving themselves to the subject of life's sentence. However, the achievement of what bell hooks calls "radical black female subjectivity" is difficult, to wit the lives of women like Fannie Lou Hamer, Angela Davis, Bernice Reagon, and many others.

What then, we must ask, is the prescription for the achievement of a "radical black female subjectivity"? What are those things which prevent it from coming to fruition?

HOWELL RAINES, "GRADY'S GIFT."

In the last reading selection of this chapter, **Howell Raines** offers us a narrative portrait of a black woman whose dreams were mocked to death by the time of her being. It is a compelling picture of

Gradystein Williams Hutchinson whose chase after rainbows ended in disillusion, but whose conversations with the author of the essay, in "the acres of afternoon" (Babs Deal), bestowed on him the most precious gift: the "gift of a free and unhateful heart."

Raines was born in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1943 and began his career as a reporter in 1964. He has worked for newspapers in Alabama, Georgia (*Atlanta Constitution*), and Florida (*St. Petersburg Times*), primarily as political editor. He was a news correspondent in Washington, D. C.-office of *The New York Times* and is presently editor of the editorial page of that publication. Raines has written articles for the op-ed pages of *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *The Times of London*. He was a contributor to the book *Campaign Money ; Whisky Man*, his novel about Depression days in the hill country of Alabama, was published in 1977. His documentary book of personal recollections, *My Soul is Rested*, also published in 1977, is considered one of the seminal texts on the Civil Rights Movement in the deep south and is required reading on the campuses of countless American colleges and universities.

At the conclusion of his essay, Raines states: "Grady [Gradystein] told me that she was moved when she went to a library and saw my book, an oral history of the civil rights movement entitled *My Soul is Rested*. . . . I was surprised that Grady had not instantly understood when the book came out in 1977 that she was its inspiration. That is my fault. I waited much too long to find her and tell her. It is her book really. She wrote it on my heart in the acres of afternoon." Although trampled by the times, by the virulent racial discrimination of Alabama in the '50s and '60s ("Boy, it's terrible being black in Birmingham"), untouched by the notions of "radical black feminism," Grady, a member of that generation "who saw their best chances burned away by the last fiery breaths of segregation," reached a higher level of achievement than one of personal fulfillment. In being a sign of that time which we must remember and with which younger generations must become familiar, she defines the nation at a certain time in its history. Grady's reach is, however, remarkable, for it is not hampered by her time, but finds its impact on the philosophy and the intellectual foundation of Raines. While she was "unfree" to pursue her dreams, to chase her rainbows, Grady provided freedom from hatred to a young white boy, and through him and his works, to countless others. Her actions follow the American paradigm so eloquently articulated by Albert Murray in his essay: "(1) affirmation in the face of adversity, and (2) improvisation in situations of disruption and discontinuity."

Du Bois prophesized that the "concrete test of the underlying principles of the great republic is the Negro Problem." He knew, as we do today, that the so-called burden of race cannot be comprehended solely in the legislative forum or in the struggles for civil rights. The journey through the darkness of alienation is a quest for full self-consciousness, a "spiritual striving of the freedmen's sons" which represents a "travail of souls whose burden is almost beyond the measure of their strength, but who bear it in the name of historic race, in the name of this land of their fathers' fathers, and in the name of human opportunity."

The authors of the essays or the persons about whom the essays were written address the theme of black consciousness and identity—that “Way of Being”—that common thread which connects all of the essays in this chapter.

While reading the essays in this chapter, one must seek and find that one major factor which the African American must avoid, but, in many cases, has not, in order to achieve a “black consciousness,” as well as that sense of self within the context of America. And still, one must observe and identify how the African American’s quest for freedom and justice offers undeniable testimony to the core values of America and its realization of democracy.



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INTRODUCTION

Our "being" in this nation is the result of what is considered the most horrendous act perpetuated by man against his fellowman. Our being in this nation provides it with singular moments to enact what it says are its core values: equality and justice. Chapter Two affords us an opportunity to examine some of the sacred documents on which the nation was founded and to explore (1) how they had and have still an impact on the lives of African Americans; (2) how the nation was and is being shaped by the concerns and plight of the African American; and (3) how African Americans responded to injustices.

Stripped of the access to their culture, to their community, family, the "rememory" of their history, of all those things to which every human being is entitled, packed like sardines in the holds of ships for months, our ancestors arrived in the New World and were enslaved—not because they were criminals, but because there was money to be made from their forced labor. In the words of Sterling Allen Brown, "consideration of abstract justice had to give way before economic expediency." So what capture, the slave ship, the "seasoning" in Barbados did not do, the *institution of slavery* attempted to do. This peculiar institution, as it was called, took out its remarkable erasure to erase humanity from the faces and spirits of our forefathers and mothers. The late young poet and novelist Henry Dumas remarked: "They failed to ask my name and called me negro." – So it was here where we must begin to chart a remarkable journey, recounting attempts to rename us, to erase us, but, most important, to recount our success at naming ourselves and drawing boldly the lines of our humanity.

CLINTON ROSSITER, "AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FEDERALIST PAPERS: HAMILTON, MADISON, AND JAY."

THE FEDERALIST PAPERS: HAMILTON, MADISON, AND JAY, "NO. 54: MADISON."

We begin with *The Federalist Papers* which, according to Clinton Rossiter, is third only to the *Declaration of Independence* and the *Constitution* in its importance among the sacred documents of American political history. *The Federalist Papers* were written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay who, in a series of essays published in New York City newspapers, commencing on October 27, 1787, under the pseudonym Publius, analyzed and defended the *Constitution* of the United States. According to countless scholars, *The Federalist Papers* are an enduring classic of American political theory. Specifically, we begin with "No. 54: Madison" which addresses the issue of apportionment of members in the House of Representatives guaranteed to the States and how that apportionment was to be determined. The important question for us is how the enslaved was to be counted to determine the apportionment: "But does it follow, from an admission of numbers for the measure of representation, or of slaves combined with free citizens as a ratio of taxation, that slaves ought to be included in the numerical rule of representation? Slaves are considered as property, not as persons." In No. 54 the conundrum was: Should the enslaved be considered property or human. The answer was: "Let the compromising expedient of the Constitution be mutually adopted which regards them as inhabitants, but as debased by servitude below the equal level of free inhabitants, which regards the slave as divested of two fifths of the man." This was a defining moment for the African American; he was considered three fifths of a man.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, *DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE* .

In the *Reader* is reprinted the other sacred document, the *Declaration of Independence* , which was written in 1776 by **Thomas Jefferson** (1743-1826) and next to which is juxtaposed the bicentennial Jefferson lecture, "The Dream Deferred," delivered by John Hope Franklin for the National Endowment for the Humanities in 1976.

Jefferson was elected governor of Virginia in 1779; subsequently, he was appointed in 1785 the United States minister to France. In 1789 he was appointed United States Secretary of State and in 1796 elected Vice President of the United States. Jefferson was the third President of the United States who served two terms from 1801 to 1809. One of Jefferson's many achievements was the founding of the University of Virginia in 1819 -- today one of the nation's great universities. The *Declaration of Independence* is a moving account of the nation's quest for freedom and independence from England. In the matter of freedom for the enslaved African, Jefferson wrote in 1820 after a lifetime of reflection on and participation in the institution of slavery: "We have the wolf by the ears, and we can neither hold him, nor safely let him go. Justice is on one scale, and self-preservation on the other."

How then was it possible that the Founding Father, which Jefferson is often called, who wrote so eloquently about the freedom to which all men are entitled and who argued passionately for the abolition of slavery at the nation's inception, could have been one of the nation's largest slaveholders? How was it possible that Jefferson, on the one hand, could argue for the return of the enslaved African to Africa and, on the other hand, advocate the institution of slavery throughout the Union? What then were and are the consequences of Jefferson's warring ideals and vested interests for the nation for which he articulated its core values?

JOHN HOPE FRANKLIN, "THE DREAM DEFERRED."

In his Jefferson Lecture of 1976, in the great African-American tradition of call-and-response, **John Hope Franklin**, the James B. Duke Professor *emeritus* of History at Duke University, states "[a]s the most important document of the Revolution and easily one of the most important statements on the rights of man ever published, it seems unfortunate that the *Declaration of Independence* , in its final form, said nothing at all about the widespread practice of trading in human flesh and holding human beings in perpetual bondage."

Franklin is a native of Oklahoma and an *alumnus* of Fisk University. Having earned the A.M. and Ph.D. degrees in history from Harvard University, Franklin pursued a teaching career at a number of institutions of higher learning, one of which is Howard University. In 1964 he joined the faculty of the University of Chicago, serving as chairman of the Department of History from 1967 to 1970. From 1969 to 1982 he was the John Matthews Manly Distinguished Service Professor. Nationally acknowledged and acclaimed for his scholarly contributions to the reappraisal of the American Civil War and the importance of the African American's quest for freedom in shaping the core values of the nation, Franklin was a major player in the preparation of the historic brief which led to *Brown v. Board of Education* .

THE BILL OF RIGHTS AND AMENDMENTS (FROM THE *CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES*).

ARTICLES OF THE *CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES* REFERRING TO SLAVERY AND THE RIGHTS OF SLAVES.

THE DRED SCOTT DECISION OF THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT, MARCH 6, 1857 (THE OPINION OF CHIEF JUSTICE ROGER BROOKE TANEY).

Not until 1865 did the Nation amend the other sacred document, the *Constitution* , excerpts of which are also included in the *Reader* and which made law the abolishment of slavery. And not until 1868, in Article XIV of the Bill of Rights, did the Nation recognize the African American as a citizen with all of the privileges and immunities accorded to all other citizens. However, prior to 1868, as a matter of fact in

1857, the United States Supreme Court heard the famous **Dred Scott** case, *Scott v. Sandford*, and ruled that not only was Scott still a slave, but that forbidding slavery in the new mid-western territories was unconstitutional. According to many scholars of American history and constitutional law, the ruling of the Supreme Court in the Dred Scott case propelled America into the Civil War and exacerbated the tensions between Northerners and Southerners in the matter of the enslavement of the African. In this Chapter are provided a brief biographical sketch of Dred Scott and the opinion of Chief Justice Roger Brooke Taney of the United States Supreme Court in the matter of Scott.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, *THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION* .

JAMES M. MCPHERSON, "WHO FREED THE SLAVES?"

In the matter of freedom for the enslaved African, the *Reader* provides the text of the *Emancipation Proclamation* issued on September 21, 1862 and signed into law by **President Abraham Lincoln** on January 1, 1863, and **James McPherson's** enlightening essay "**Who Freed the Slaves?**"

Was it Lincoln? Was it the slave himself? (One must remember that Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation to free only the slaves in the Confederacy—an attempt to deny the South of its labor force and encourage African Americans to escape from bondage.)

Although the *Emancipation Proclamation* freed three-fourths of the three and a half million slaves, it had virtually little effect, given that the slaves lived in territory over which the Federal Government had no authority. Additionally, the *Proclamation* did absolutely nothing for the million slaves who lived in the border states and in territory occupied by Union troops. Their bondage lasted until the adoption of the Thirteenth Amendment on December 18, 1865. However, the *Emancipation Proclamation* encouraged thousands of slaves to "steal away" from the plantations, denying the Confederate its labor force, thus dealing a crippling blow to its war efforts.

Lincoln was the sixteenth President of the United States, serving from 1861 until his untimely death at the assassin's hand in 1865. A son of a Kentucky frontiersman, born on February 12, 1809, Lincoln had to struggle to obtain an education and to earn a living. It was his great fortune to have presided over what was the most horrendous war on American soil, the American Civil War. It was the African American's struggle for freedom which gave this war between the Confederacy and the Union a noble cause. Without the ingredient of the quest for emancipation, the American Civil War would have been an ignoble slaughter of human beings.

Although one has observed Lincoln's ambivalence relative to the emancipation of the African American prior to and during the Civil War—for he had also defended slavery and had promised to accept the institution of slavery, if he could save the Union—his position became, however, extremely clear in his

eloquent second Inaugural Address, portions of which follow:

It may seem strange than any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces but let us judge not that we be not judged . . . [T]he Almighty has His own Purposes. "Who unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" If we shall suppose that American Slavery is one of those offences which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time, He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South, this terrible war, as the woe due those to those by whom the offence came shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a Living God always ascribe to Him?

Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue, until all the wealth piled by the bond-man's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash, shall be paid by another drawn with the sword as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said "the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

In McPherson's essay are presented the views of the proponents of the self-emancipation thesis as well as the essayist's position which gives Lincoln's actions during the Civil War credit for the emancipation of the African American. However, McPherson, who is the George Henry Davis 1886 Professor of American History at Princeton University and a member of the faculty there since 1962, reminds us that it was the "agitation" of men like Frederick Douglass who kept the issue of slavery on the national agenda, and it was the African American who, coming into the Union lines, withdrew his labor from Confederate owners, by working for the Union Army and fighting as soldiers in it.

PAUL FINKELMAN, "THE UNION ARMY'S FIGHTING 54TH."

A stunning example of the African American's quest for freedom is provided in **Paul Finkelman's essay "The Union Army's Fighting 54th."** Fighting for themselves and their people, the soldiers of the 54th trumpeted their people's humanity, ability, and place in the nation. In memory of the 54th's gallant efforts, Augustus Saint-Gauden sculpted a memorial to Colonel Robert Gould Shaw and the Massachusetts 54th Regiment, the first black infantry unit in the Union Army. This impressive memorial, a small section of which is reproduced in the *Reader*, is on exhibit at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D. C.

In his remarks at the installation of the memorial at the National Gallery, retired **General Colin Powell**, a member of the Board of Trustees of Howard University, states that "to understand this memorial and to put it in perspective, you have to go way back before 1863," the year in which the black soldiers left Boston to fight on behalf of the Union and their freedom and the year in which they were killed in the assault on Fort Wagner in South Carolina. "You have to go back," continued Powell, "to the birth of our nation in 1776. You have to reflect on the ringing Declaration of Independence that said all men were created equal, and these truths were self-evident, and they were granted certain inalienable rights: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It also said that governments are instituted to secure these rights for our citizens. But just as self-evident at that time that there was a group of citizens that was not included. If your skin happened to be black, these rights did not accrue to you." It was in the Civil War that the nation was forced to begin to grapple with the core value which had sustained it emotionally but which it, as the result of the institution of slavery, could never realize, namely that all men are created equal. The success of Lincoln and the Union in defeating the Confederacy put an end to the institution of slavery; however, new hurdles presented themselves for the African Americans to clear. Even though blacks were guaranteed their freedom, the nation, principally through the judicial system, kept them in bondage, limiting their access to those things which had been guaranteed to all citizens by the *Constitution*. Even the highest court, the United States Supreme Court, betrayed the African American.

PLESSY V. FERGUSON , MAY 18, 1896.

RAYFORD W. LOGAN, "THE SUPREME COURT AND THE NEGRO."

BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION .

In his seminal book *The Betrayal of the Negro: From Rutherford Hayes to Woodrow Wilson* , first published in 1954, Rayford W. Logan "reveals" the Reconstruction period and how the African American's quests for true freedom were cynically unraveled by the United States Supreme Court, among others.

Professor Logan was born in Washington, D. C., on January 7, 1897. Having graduated in 1917 from Williams College (Williamstown, Massachusetts) and having served as a first lieutenant in 1918 with the 372nd Regiment of Infantry in France in the battle in the Argonne Forest and at camp Acona (near Bordeaux) in the First World War, Logan remained in France where he served from 1921 until 1924 as deputy secretary of the Pan African Association, as well as secretary and interpreter at the Paris session of the Pan African Congress in 1921 and at the Pan African Congress (London, England) in 1923. Upon his return to the United States, he began a distinguished career as a university professor at what is now Virginia Union University (Richmond). It was while he was teaching that he earned the M.A. in history from Williams College (1929), a second M.A. (1932), and the Ph.D. (1936) from Harvard University. In 1938 Professor Logan joined the faculty of Howard University and from 1942 until 1961 served as chairman of the Department of History. The author of numerous scholarly articles, books, and a history of Howard University, *Howard University: The First One Hundred Years (1867-1967)* , Professor Logan retired from Howard University in 1974, however not from scholarly activities. He died on November 4, 1982.

In the introduction of 1997 reprint of *The Betrayal of the Negro* , Eric Foner remarks that the book affords the reader "an overall framework that still helps to guide interpretations of the era." What Professor Logan reveals and documents is the duplicity and the collusion of both the North and South in eviscerating the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, and thereby, depriving African Americans of their rights as citizens, among which are equal education and equal access to employment. From *The Betrayal of the Negro* is taken the sixth Chapter, "The Supreme Court and the Negro," in which the author indicates that the book was going to press as *Plessy v. Ferguson* , which defined for the nation the doctrine of "separate but equal," was being challenged in the United States Supreme Court. That challenge was successful and is known as *Brown v. Board of Education* . One must also be cognizant of the fact that when *The Betrayal of the Negro* went to press, the doctrine of "separate but equal" was still law of the land, with, of course, some exceptions, those being some efforts of the United States Supreme Court to enforce, according to Professor Logan, "'substantial equality' in the separate accommodations." However, the Court still had not ruled on the constitutionality of segregation under the equal protection clause. (Both *Plessy v. Ferguson* and *Brown v. Board of Education* have been

reprinted in the *Reader* for ready reference.) "Jim Crow" or segregation was the brainchild of the South; however, its spread in almost every corner of the country was facilitated by apathy and silence of white Americans. Not only did the judicial branch of the Government decline to take up the African American's cause, but, after 1890, the executive branch merely closed its eyes to the plight of the African American. Even the legislative branch began to repeal almost all of the Reconstruction laws which were at that time still in force.

In 1896 the United States Supreme Court ruled that the system of strict racial segregation was constitutional in the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson*. Homer A. Plessy, an African American, brought a legal challenge to the Louisiana law requiring railroads to provide "equal but separate accommodations" for Euro-Americans and African-Americans. Finding support in an earlier Massachusetts case, the Court upheld Louisiana's statute, denying Plessy's petition, approving the "separate-but-equal" doctrine, and giving constitutional support to the "Jim Crow" system not only to travel, but to all areas of public life. Not until 1954 did the Court reverse its 1896 decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson*. On May 17, 1954, after many long years of litigation by the NAACP, the United States Supreme Court announced its unanimous decision in the case of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*. It ruled that "in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate-but-equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." This decision made racial segregation in state-supported schools unconstitutional, destroyed one of the main pillars of the "Jim Crow" system, and laid the constitutional foundation for the realization of a democratic society in which individuals are judged solely on their merits and qualifications. It was the NAACP, the leadership of the late Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, and an extraordinary legal team, among whom were James M. Nabrit Jr., William H. Hastie Jr., Loren Miller, Robert L. Carter, Spottswood W. Robinson III, Frank Reeves, Louis Redding, Howard Jenkins, George E. C. Hayes, William Coleman, Leon Ransom, Herbert Reid, and William R. Ming -- men responsible for this epoch-making decision.

What had the United States Supreme Court done for the first time, according to Professor Logan, in Plessy v. Ferguson? Consider the opinion of the majority of the Court, especially the following: "We consider the fallacy of the plaintiff's [Plessy's] argument to consist in the assumption that the enforced separation of the two races stamps the colored race with a badge of inferiority. If this be so, it is not by reason of anything found in the act, but solely because the colored race chooses to put that construction upon it." Read "Mr. Justice Harlan dissenting" on page 108 of the Reader. What were some of legal maneuverings which the lower courts and the United States Supreme Court used to deny the African American "certain inalienable rights"? What was the sole right of the African American under the Fourteenth Amendment which the United States Supreme Court upheld? To whom was left the protection of the African American?

"SOUTHERN DISTURBANCES: SIX NEGROES LYNCHED AT TRENTON, TENN."

Cruelly abused while enslaved, the African American embarked on what he thought was a journey to real freedom and equality. Emancipated and declared citizens of the United States, African Americans, however, were often lynched by mobs of whites well into the 20th Century.

Read the newspaper-accounts reprinted on pages 121, 122, and 123 of the Reader and go to your web site and pull up www.maafa.org for more graphic information.

KENNETH S. TOLLETT, "THE STRANGLING BLACK RIGHTS."

Concluding Chapter Two is **Kenneth S. Tollett's** review of the judicial obstacles which African Americans had to struggle to overcome and which prevented them from realizing the fruits of full citizenship.

Will this time -- our time be or is this time—our time—a "Second Post-Reconstruction"?



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INTRODUCTION: HOWARD UNIVERSITY

In Chapter Three, Howard University—the institution—is subject. It begins with a dedicatory sonnet by Ivan Earle Taylor (1904-1991) who, having graduated from Howard University in 1931 with the B. A. degree in English, having been awarded the Ph.D. degree in English and American literature by the University of Pennsylvania in 1943 and taught at a number of other colleges, returned to Howard to serve for thirty-three years as professor of English, chairman of the Department of English, and eventually as Director of the Graduate Expository Writing Program in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. In 1989 his *alma mater* conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters in recognition of his long and distinguished service to the Department of English and the University at large. Under Dr. Taylor's direction, the Master of Arts program in the Department of English prospered, and the Ph.D. degree program was established.

"Gentle Mother" is from a collection of seventy-eight of Dr. Taylor's sonnets which was published in *The Journal of Religious Thought* (Summer/Fall, 1990, vol. 47, No.1) and is a praise-song to Howard—an institution of higher learning which has nurtured and sustained scholars and emerging scholars of African descent since its founding in 1867.

The idea of Howard University occurred in the days immediately following the American Civil War. The enslavement of African Americans had been abolished, and thousands of newly emancipated men and women, many of them from Virginia, Maryland, and from farther south, came to Washington, D. C., forming c. one-third of the population of the city. Deprived of opportunities for advancement, these men and women had to prepare themselves for the freedom.

Leaders had to be trained. So on the evening of November 20, 1866, ten persons gathered at the home of Henry A. Brewster and decided to establish an educational institution. "In view of the pressing demand of the southern field," the resolution was passed. It was decided that the school would be called Howard Theological Seminary in honor of General Oliver Otis Howard who had been active in organizing the project. Initially, General Howard objected to the school's being named in his honor; however, at the urging of the others, he reluctantly agreed. At a meeting on January 8, 1867, the name of the proposed institution was changed to Howard University.

Oliver Otis Howard graduated in 1854 from the United States Military Academy at West Point and was appointed colonel of a Maine Regiment in 1861. Having served with distinction at Bull Run in the American Civil War, Howard was promoted to the rank of brigadier general in the Union Army and subsequently to major general after seeing action at Fair Oaks and Antietam. In 1863 he was given the command of the Army of the Cumberland and the Army of Tennessee and in 1865 accompanied General William Tecumseh Sherman on his famous "march to the sea." He also was present at the surrender of Confederate General Joseph Eggleston Johnston near Durham, North Carolina, in 1865. At the conclusion of the Civil War, General Howard was appointed Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau and held that position until 1874. As Commissioner he became interested in the idea of establishing an educational institution for African Americans. Initially established to care for Negro refugees during the Civil War, the mandate of the Freedmen's Bureau was extended, over President Andrew Johnson's veto, to include supplying food, clothing, fuel, and health care to countless Negroes in the years following the Civil War. In February 1867 the organization of Howard University began to progress rapidly, and plans were formulated for the application for a Congressional charter. The first draft of the application was presented on January 26, 1867, and was amended on February 6th. The revised application was passed by the Thirty-ninth Congress, and the charter was approved by President Andrew Johnson on March 2, 1867.

The act of incorporation for Howard University declares that "there be established and is hereby established in the District of Columbia, a university for the education of youth in the

liberal arts and sciences under the name, style, and title of The Howard University." Its incorporators included Samuel C. Pomeroy, Charles B. Boynton, Oliver O. Howard, Burton C. Cook, Charles H. Hoard, James B. Tuchinson, Henry A. Brewster, Benjamin E. M. Cushman, Hiram Barber, E. W. Robinson, W. F. Bascom, James B. Johnson, and Silas F. Loomis. The charter authorized, among other things, the establishment of the Normal and Preparatory, The Collegiate, the Theological, the Medical, the Law, and the Agricultural Departments. Five years after the University admitted its first students, it offered instruction in the following departments: Normal and Preparatory, Musical, Theological, Military, Industrial, Commercial College, Law, and Medicine.

Under the leadership of General Howard, who served from 1869 until 1874 as the institution's third president, Howard University began to serve large numbers of students. According to Walter Dyson who published the first history of Howard University, *Howard University: The Capstone of Negro Education—A History: 1867-1940*, Charles Brandon Boynton was the first president of the University, serving from March 19, 1867 until August 27, 1867. Byron Sunderland was the second president of the University, serving from August 27, 1867 until April 5, 1869. When, on December 1, 1873, the Board of Trustees refused to accept the resignation of General Howard and granted him an indefinite leave of absence, it elected John Mercer Langston vice president and acting president of the University. Langston tendered his resignation on December 25, 1874, the date on which General Howard's resignation was accepted. However, he was persuaded to continue until the end of the academic year. On June 30, 1875, Langston resigned. Langston, an African American, was Dean of the Law School. His candidacy for the presidency of Howard University was supported by those who believed he would be a role model for his race and, as such, would encourage white philanthropists to support the institution; however, after what some call an uneventful term as president, Langston resigned in 1875 in order to return to the practice of law.

Mordecai Wyatt Johnson was appointed in 1926 the thirteenth and "first" African-American president of Howard University—a position which he held for thirty-four years. A native of Paris, Henry County, Tennessee, Dr. Johnson graduated in 1911 with the degree of Bachelor of Arts from

Morehouse College (Atlanta); a second Bachelor of Arts degree was awarded to him in 1913 by the University of Chicago. In 1922 Harvard University conferred upon him the degree of Master of Science in theology. In 1923 Howard University conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity; a similar honorary degree was conferred upon him by the Gammon Theological Seminar in 1928.

Chapter Three contains five of the most important speeches delivered at and about Howard University; three of them were delivered by presidents of the institution.

MORDECAI WYATT JOHNSON, "INAUGURAL ADDRESS."

On June 10, 1927, Dr. Johnson delivered his **"Inaugural Address,"** as the first African-American president of Howard University. In his address he defined the relationship between Howard and the African-American people—Howard's role in educating African Americans so that they might become major contributors to every facet of American life. As "one of the great romances of American education," Howard, according to Dr. Johnson, is "a monument to the capacity of the Negro himself." In this speech, one hears the first clarion call for the University to become that place where the African American will be given opportunities to explore and study fully his humanity, history, and identity in his quest for freedom. In so doing, he surely will find, according to Dr. Johnson, solutions which will benefit all mankind. Never far from his mind was the reality of America in 1927, namely that it was not a place where all men and women enjoyed all of the rights and privileges of citizenship and where higher education for African Americans was not considered a priority item in the national budget. In its infancy, the University received most of its financial support from the Freedmen's Bureau. When, in 1873, this support was discontinued, Howard had to rely on contributions from the private sector. In 1879 Congress authorized an annual, albeit nominal, appropriation to the University. It was, however, in 1924 that, after many years of discussion and debate, a group of Congressmen was successful in initiating action to legislate annual appropriations to Howard. So on December 18, 1928, the University's Charter was amended to make provisions for an annual appropriation to support the maintenance and improvement of the institution. Ever mindful of the time—one in which African Americans were still being denied their rights as citizens of American—and the dire financial situation in which Howard found itself, Dr. Johnson began to chart the future course of the University. When Dr. Johnson became president, there were 1700 students enrolled in the eight schools and colleges. None of the schools and colleges held national accreditation, and the University's budget was \$700,000. It was at the beginning of Dr. Johnson's presidency that the above-mentioned annual appropriations to the University were made law by Congress. At the time of Dr. Johnson's retirement, as a result of his visionary leadership, the University had 6,000 students, 10 schools and colleges, all of which were accredited, and a budget of \$8 million.

JAMES E. CHEEK, "IF WE DO NOT, THEN WHO WILL?: THE CONTINUING BURDEN TO UNDO THE YOKE OF BONDAGE."

"If We Do Not . . ." by Dr. James Edward Cheek is more than a "song of praise" sung in honor of the University; it is a challenge to the nation to recognize the need for Howard and other Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), as well as the singular and unique contributions of these institutions and their *alumni/ae*. A native of North Carolina and also an *alumnus* of Morehouse College, Dr. Cheek had a distinguished career in higher education as president of Shaw University (Raleigh, North Carolina) prior

to his becoming the fifteenth president of Howard University. His administration of the University spanned twenty years (1969-1989). It was during his presidency that the University's academic programs, encompassing the eighteen schools and colleges, as well as the nineteen institutes and research centers, and a major teaching hospital, began an unprecedented expansion. In his speech "If We Do Not . . .," Dr. Cheek reminds us of the University's enormous responsibility to the African-American community and to the younger generation.

A. LEON HIGGINBOTHAM JR., "WE WISH TO PLEAD OUR CAUSE. TOO LONG HAVE OTHERS SPOKEN FOR US."

Dr. Cheek's and **Judge A. Leon Higginbotham Jr.'s** speeches are strong defenses of a University whose existence, relevancy, and special relationship with the Federal Government have been questioned and still are in many corners of public and private life. Higginbotham, Chief Judge *emeritus* of the U. S. Court of Appeals and author of the prize-winning book *In the Matter of Color*, delivered "**We Wish to Plead Our Cause**" at Howard's commencement on May 10, 1980. Prior to his death in December 1998, Judge Higginbotham was public service professor of jurisprudence at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. He is also the recipient of the nation's highest civilian award, the Presidential Medal of Freedom (1995).

ZORA NEALE HURSTON, "THE HUE AND CRY ABOUT HOWARD UNIVERSITY."

TONI MORRISON'S CHARTER DAY ADDRESS.

Zora Neale Hurston's essay and **Toni Morrison's Charter Day Address** provide opposing perspectives on Howard University. Both attended Howard University; each used, in her assessment of the institution, lenses of personal reflection.

Born in Eatonville, Florida, on January 7, 1891, best known for her novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), Hurston attended Howard in the 20s, and it is reported that she earned an associate's degree. Hurston's whimsical account of her observations while she was a student at Howard provides insight into her gift as raconteur.

While Hurston tugs at the "proper" hemlines of the University, Nobel Laureate Morrison reminisces lovingly about her student days at Howard; provides a glowing defense of the institution's founding and charge; delivers a stunning, yet chilling, scenario of how a minority and its young can be demonized; challenges the University to "dust off" the charting maps of the past and lead its constituents and the nation into a future of critical learning and understanding. To date the only Howard graduate to have been awarded the Nobel Prize, Toni Morrison graduated in 1953, having majored in English and minored in

classics. A native of Lorain, Ohio, Nobel Laureate Morrison was an instructor of English at Howard from 1957 until 1964 and presently is the Robert F. Goheen Professor in the Council of the Humanities at Princeton University.

H. PATRICK SWYGERT, "CHALLENGES, CHANGE AND THE FUTURE OF HOWARD UNIVERSITY."

H. Patrick Swygert is the second *alumnus* to occupy the position of president of Howard University. He received both the B.A. and the J.D. degree from Howard. A native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, having served as president of SUNY-Albany, Mr. Swygert became Howard's seventeenth president in 1995. President Swygert delivered "**Challenges, Change and the Future of Howard University**" at the institution's Opening Convocation on September 29, 1995. Like his predecessors Johnson and Cheek, President Swygert maintains that the University shall continue to be that place "dedicated to the unequivocal search for truth." It should be that place which, through its faculty's research and academic programs, will continue to deliver the truth about the African American's quest for and definition of freedom, as well as the urgent need to preserve that freedom. It should be that place which will continue to seek and find truth through the exercise of critical thinking and which will continue to seek and find truth to counter, for example, the oft-touted theories of African-American genetic inferiority. President Swygert envisions a university where exemplary teaching and service will be the hallmarks of his administration.

W. E. B. DU BOIS, "THE FIELD AND FUNCTION OF THE NEGRO COLLEGE."

In 1933 **W. E. B. Du Bois** published the essay "**The Field and Function of the Negro College**" which expresses his vision of the "Negro college." In his introductory remarks, Du Bois writes that, with this essay, he wanted to "guide in general the Negro college." He wanted to reject the notion that, upon becoming secular colleges, the Southern Negro colleges were no longer *Negro colleges*, but *colleges* which taught the arts and sciences. Skillfully, Du Bois proffers his definition of what a Negro college is or should be.

Born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts in 1868, W. E. B. Du Bois received the Ph.D. degree in 1894 from Harvard University. His dissertation thesis, *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade in America*, remains the authoritative work on the subject and is the first volume in Harvard's Historical Series. Prolific writer, activist, proponent of Pan-Africanism, one of the founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Du Bois was one of this nation's greatest thinkers. According to Martin Luther King Jr., Du Bois' "greatness lay in his quest for truth about his own people." Du Bois' entire *opus* explores that truth.

Summarize briefly the essays which constitute Chapter Three and enter those summaries in a diary. What distinctions does Du Bois make between a "Negro College" and a "college"? Describe the two philosophies of education found on pages 134-135. What are, according to Du Bois, the roles of teachers and students in building an "ideal" university? What is, according to Du Bois, the "functioning of a perfect system of education"?



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INTRODUCTION

The essayists in Chapter Four provide their reflections on the following questions: Who are we? Who and what are and have we been in and to America? What have we contributed to the debate of our place in the nation? What are our responsibilities to the constant struggle for true freedom?

W. E. B. DU BOIS, "THE TALENTED TENTH."

In the now famous essay "**The Talented Tenth (1903)**," published together with other essays in his seminal work, *The Souls of Black Folk*, **W. E. B. Du Bois** places his hopes for the race—emancipated at the time of the book's initial publication for almost four decades—on a black elite who, having been liberally educated, would provide leadership for their people to true freedom, to a kind of racial assertiveness. While reading this essay, one should seek to find the answers to:

What does Du Bois mean by "liberally educated"? What, according to him, should the goal of "Higher Education" be? What does Du Bois define as a "system of education"? Does one, in this essay, discern a chord of disagreement with Booker T. Washington's position relative to Trade Schools and the African American?

Washington, founder of Tuskegee Institute, rejected the notion of liberal education for the African American for what he called "practical knowledge" or learning a trade.

Could and did, in fact, Washington's accommodationist views sustain the African American in a nation which, through almost every legal channel available, sought to deny and was indeed successful at denying the African American his rights to equal education and access to employment?

What could not be enforced legally was achieved by lynching—the lynching of countless African American men, many of whom had fought for America in the First World War. One must note with interest what Du Bois maintains are the "levers to uplift a people" and how those "levers" were being destroyed, immediately prior to, during, and after *The Souls of Black Folk* was first published—destroyed by the dismantling of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments of the *Constitution*.

What then is the role of the "Negro" college in the race's struggle to repair the damaged "levers"? (Review the commentary on Du Bois in the Study Guide for Chapter Three.)

ARTHUR A. SCHOMBURG, "THE NEGRO DIGS UP HIS PAST."

Among those who provided for the future of Africans in the Diaspora a prescription—one which would restore them in the eyes of the world to the position of which slavery robbed them, would restore the memory of their contributions to the fight for emancipation—is **Arthur Alfonso Schomburg**.

Born on January 24, 1874, in Puerto Rico of a freeborn black mother and a mestizo merchant of German heritage, Schomburg became intensely interested in the contributions of the African in the Diaspora when, he reports, his fifth-grade teacher maintained that people of color had no history of any consequence. It

was as a result of this experience that Schomburg began his quest to document the history and accomplishments of a people whose humanity others had attempted to erase or ignore. Having contributed much to the history of Afro-Latinos, Schomburg immigrated to New York in 1891 and broadened his quest to include all Africans in the Diaspora. Co-founder of the American Negro Academy which, according to its constitution, was "an organization of authors, scholars, artists, and those distinguished in other walks of life, men of African descent, for the promotion of Letters, Science, and Art," Schomburg joined men like W. E. B. Du Bois, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Archibald H. Grimke, James Weldon Johnson, Alain LeRoy Locke, Kelly Miller, and Carter G. Woodson; enjoined the search for "scientific truth" to combat "scientific racism"; and became one of this century's foremost and most important bibliographers and collectors of manuscripts and artifacts by and about the African in the Diaspora. In 1926, much of what Schomburg had collected was donated to the Division of Negro History of the New York Public Library. Today, the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, curated for many years by Schomburg himself, is one of the most important repositories of materials on the African in the Diaspora, comprising nearly six million items.

Schomburg's essay "**The Negro Digs Up His Past**" first appeared in that extraordinary March 1925-issue of *Survey Graphic*. Here is found yet another clarion call—similar to the one articulated by Du Bois and Locke—for the African American to document scientifically and lay claim to his history and culture. For, according to Schomburg, "[t]he Negro has been a man without history because he has been considered a man without a worthy culture." Schomburg admonishes that this work, this scientific discovery should avoid "bias" as well as "counter-bias," that this work should not be done by the "rabid amateur who has glibly tried to prove half of the world's geniuses to have been Negroes and to trace the pedigree of nineteenth century Americans from the Queen of Sheba." It is interesting to note that in this same issue of *Survey Graphic* are Locke's "Enter the New Negro," James Weldon Johnson's "The Making of Harlem," Charles S. Johnson's "Black Workers and the City," Rudolph Fisher's "The South Lingers On," W. E. B. Du Bois' "The Black Man Brings His Gifts," Kelly Miller's "The Harvest of Race Prejudice," and J. A. Rogers' "Jazz at Home."

CARTER G. WOODSON, "THE MIGRATION OF THE TALENTED TENTH."

Immediately following Du Bois' essay is **Carter G. Woodson's "The Migration of the Talented Tenth."** Woodson addresses the real concern, namely that educated African Americans—those who have studied "history, law and economics and well understand what it is to get the rights guaranteed them by the constitution"—were leaving the South *en masse* out of fear. Because of their outspokenness, they had been intimidated, denied opportunities to make a living, and, in some cases, killed by whites (s. the recent retrial of the Dahmer case).

However, what does the "Talented Tenth" find in the North—Beulah land? What happened to the South as a result of the African American's having left that region? What was then, according to Woodson, the state of black America? Have things changed today? Compare what Woodson notes was "liberal attitudes of some whites" in the North at the time the essay was penned with those which exist today? What is the state of black America today? (s. Manning's essay in Chapter One.)

ALAIN LOCKE, "THE NEW NEGRO."

On the heels of Woodson's essay is the **Alain LeRoy Locke's** clarion call for the creation of the "New Negro"—a treatise which is in a collection of essays entitled *The New Negro*, published in 1925. In "**The New Negro**," Locke notes that "shifting of the Negro population . . . not only . . . toward the North and the Central Midwest, but cityward and to the great centers of industry." And according to Locke, this transplantation has transformed the Negro.

One must explain how Woodson and Locke viewed this migration and Locke's definition of the "old" and "new" Negro. What does Locke define as the inner and outer objectives of the African American? Do you agree that the African American's "outer life [was] happily already well and finally formulated" and that their objectives "are none other than the ideals of American institutions and democracy"? What is, according to Locke, the course which has been or must be taken to realize the African American's "inner objectives"? Compare Locke's definition of a "social protestant" with that of "a genuine radical." And what was, according to Locke, Harlem's role in the realization of the New "Negroism"? How does Locke's understanding of the role of the "talented group" comport with that of Du Bois? Should, as Locke maintains, art ("productive fields of creative expression") be distinguished from the world of "propaganda" or what he calls the "arid fields of controversy and debate"?

Locke was born in Philadelphia on September 16, 1886, and died in New York City on June 9, 1954, a month prior to the United States Supreme Court's decision on *Brown v. Board of Education*. Philosopher, essayist, and educator, Locke joined the faculty of Howard University in 1912, having completed the requirements for the A.B. degree in philosophy at Harvard, a bachelor of literature degree in 1910, as the first African-American Rhodes scholar, at Oxford University in England, and pursued a course of study at the University of Berlin (Germany). He remained at Howard for thirty-six years, during which time he completed his doctoral studies at and received the Ph.D. degree from Harvard University. It was also during his tenure at Howard that Locke became a driving force behind what is called the New Negro Renaissance or the Harlem Renaissance and the mentor to many of that movement's major writers. Much controversy swirls still around Locke's universalistic aesthetic which was at odds with the ascent of the folk idiom. As a matter of fact, his aristocratic stance often did not provide "real" prescriptions for America and the African American as they attempted to deal with *the* issue of the 20th century, namely that of race. Interesting for its avoidance of the "arid fields of controversy and debate" is Locke's

conclusion at the end of "The New Negro" : " . . . [I]f in our life-time the Negro should not be able to celebrate his full initiation into American democracy, he can at least, on the warrant of these things, celebrate the attainment of a significant and satisfying new phase of group development, and with a spiritual Coming of Age." Locke's prescriptions—prescriptions which Locke's critics have called into questions—are clearly delineated in the essay "The Ethics of Culture," for Locke believed that the Talented Tenth, having developed good manners and speech, schooled in the manner of dress and customs, would become "advance guards and models" and win from whites fair judgment of the race. In his essay "The Position of the Negro in the American Social Order: Where Do We Go from Here?" found in Chapter One and written in 1939, many years after "The Talented Tenth" was first published, Du Bois rethinks his "earlier" panacea relative to the Talented Tenth, namely the "flight of class from mass" was to have produced an "aristocracy of talent" which, as a result of its "knowledge and *character* " (my *emphasis*), would provide leadership for the race. It appeared, however, to Du Bois in 1939 that that aristocracy had been seduced by its economic advantages, turning its back on the concerns of the masses. Du Bois concludes "[t]hat mass and class must unite for the world's salvation."

ALAIN LOCKE, "THE ETHICS OF CULTURE."

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR., "LETTER FROM BIRMINGHAM JAIL."

And the masses must come together to make real their true emancipation. While one joins Locke when he maintains that it is through education that the African American will win his way, one pauses when he maintains that the African American "must look largely to culture to win [his] just reward and recognition" ("**The Ethics of Culture**"). Frederick Douglass' call for agitation resounds hollow in Locke's essay, but resonates—vibrates—in **Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail"** which finds its place next to Locke's "The Ethics of Culture."

Born on January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia, King followed his father into the world of the church. Having been awarded the A.B. degree from Morehouse College in 1948, King went to Crozer Theological Seminary from which he graduated in 1951 at the top of his class. Subsequently, he attended Boston University where he received the Ph.D. degree in 1955. On October 31, 1954, King was ordained pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. It was here, a little more than a year after his ordination, where King would begin his most important work on behalf of his people and in the name of Civil Rights. It was here in December 1955 where the Montgomery Bus Boycott began and where King was elected president of the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA), almost immediately after the arrest of Rosa Parks. It was here where King was jailed for the first time—ostensibly for speeding, where his home was bombed and where an all-white grand jury indicted King and eighty-eight leaders of the MIA for violating a state anti-labor law prohibiting boycotts. It was also in Montgomery, Alabama, that King met E. D. Nixon whose idea it was to boycott the buses, but who has remained for years a silent and unrecognized hero (see Milton Viorst's "E. D. Nixon: The New Expectation" in Chapter Six).

Almost in complete defiance of Locke's view that culture would win the African American's just reward and recognition, King began to pen on April 16, 1963 (Good Friday), from his jail cell what is considered to be the philosophical foundation of the Civil Rights Movement: "**Letter from Birmingham Jail.**" Jailed for having attempted to desegregate Birmingham's lunch counters, restrooms, and department stores, King began to prepare what even arch-conservative William Bennett maintains is a world classic in response to a disparaging missive authored by eight local white clergymen and published in the *Birmingham News*. These men of the cloth not only denounced King, but called on King and his fellow clergymen to end the nonviolent demonstrations. Around the margins of available newspapers and on scraps of paper, King inscribed his manifesto for nonviolent resistance which was based on the teachings of Jesus and Gandhi. He summoned up the world's acknowledgment of just and unjust laws and its moral responsibility to disobey those which are unjust. This document buttressed the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. It also reminds us of Du Bois' concern that "class" had abandoned the "mass," as King remarks that he stands "in the middle of two opposing forces in the Negro community. One is a force of complacency, made up in part of Negroes who, as a result of long years of oppression, are so drained of self-respect and a sense of 'somebodiness' that they have adjusted to segregation; and in part of a few middle-class Negroes who, because of a degree of academic and economic security and because in some ways they profit by segregation, have become insensitive to the problems of the masses." Its call to action—a call not to "wait"—and those who heeded the call—brought down Jim Crow laws of the South. Remarkably, the "Letter" became, some twenty years later, one of the undergirding forces which brought an end to apartheid in the Republic of South Africa. For his untiring efforts on behalf of his people, King was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1964 in Oslo, Norway. For his efforts on behalf of his people—this time in Memphis, Tennessee, on behalf of striking sanitation workers, having delivered the memorable and yet prophetic speech "I've Been to the Mountaintop," he was assassinated on April 4, 1968.

LYNDON BAINES JOHNSON, "TO FULFILL THESE RIGHTS."

On the steps of Frederick Douglass Memorial Hall on the campus of Howard University, on a very warm June 4th in 1965, the 36th President of the United States, **Lyndon Baines Johnson**, delivered a commencement address to the graduates entitled "**To Fulfill These Rights**" which marked the beginning of his enormous efforts on behalf of the civil rights for the African American in terms of guarantees of voting rights as well as employment and educational opportunities. Johnson, born on August 27, 1908, in Stonewall, Texas, threw on this occasion the full weight of the Oval Office behind an initiative which would shock and dismay his Southern and not a few of his Northern colleagues. To the creation of jobs, decent homes, an equal opportunity in education, welfare and social programs to support poor families, and care for the sick, Johnson pledged his administration. And yet, he promised more in his remarks about American justice and the promise it holds for the African American.

CORNEL WEST, "LEARNING TO TALK OF RACE."

TONI MORRISON, "ON THE BACKS OF BLACKS."

One must ask where the Nation is today and whether it has provided the answers to the wrongs done to the African American. One skips to the end of the Chapter and reads **Cornel West's essay "Learning to Talk of Race"** and **Toni Morrison's essay "On the Backs of Blacks,"** and one realizes that, while there has been some improvement in the realities of the African American, there is still much to be done. West, author of the highly acclaimed book *Race Matters* (1993) and professor of philosophy of religion at Harvard University, speaks of the riots in Los Angeles and puts the blame clearly on the consequences of a "lethal linkage of economic decline, cultural decay, and political lethargy in American life. Race was the visible catalyst, not the underlying cause."

Why, after a century of struggle, are then African Americans still a "problem people"? How does West's declarative statement that "black people are neither additions to nor defections from American life, but rather constitutive elements of that life" comport with Ralph Ellison's "What America Would Be Like Without Blacks"? What solutions does West offer to correct the ills in American society where "[t]ragic plight of our children clearly reveals our deep disregard for public well-being"? Does West's suggested solutions remind you of those offered by yet another contributor to the Reader? Who?

In her essay "On the Backs of Blacks," Morrison joins West in her portrayal of a dismal, albeit true, picture of race in the 1990s. The shaping of America is drawn, according to Morrison, by mindless race talk. And it on the backs of blacks -- by portraying blacks as the aliens against whom every immigrant to this land must discriminate—that "true" Americans are defined.

JAMES BALDWIN, "STRANGER IN THE VILLAGE."

Here in this section of the chapter, some of the nation's great artists and thinkers are called upon to address the issue of race, and in addressing it, they reveal what America is and is not. **James Arthur Baldwin** spent a lifetime unraveling the tissue which seemed to have obscured America's sight relative to the African American. Novelist, playwright, and essayist, Baldwin was born on August 2, 1924, the son of a single parent, Emma Berdis Jones, in Harlem. It was there he spent his formative years with his mother, stepfather, David Baldwin, and half-brothers and sisters. It was apparent very early that Baldwin was an exceptional child. He began, while in junior and senior high school days, to write stories and articles for a variety of literary magazines. Having completed high school, Baldwin left Harlem and went to Trenton, New Jersey, where he worked during the Second World War. He returned to New York City where he, with the support of a Eugene F. Saxton Memorial Trust Award, completed drafts of his first novel *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (1953). It has been suggested that it was as an essayist that Baldwin made his greatest impact. Certainly, *Notes of a Native Son* (1953) and *The Fire Next Time* (1963) proffer countless examples of his prowess as an essayist.

Leaving legions of writers and artists to mourn, Baldwin died on November 30, 1987. In one of the eulogies, Toni Morrison offers the following tribute: "You gave me a language to dwell in, a gift so perfect it seems my own invention. I have been thinking your spoken and written thoughts for so long I believed they were mine. I have been seeing the world through your eyes for so long, I believed that clear, clear view was my own." Baldwin continues to give—to all of us who have ears to listen.

"Stranger in the Village" is taken from the collection *Notes of a Native Son*. It is not only one of the most remarkable assessments of what white America is, but also an account of the extraordinary survival of the African American and how his very existence has compelled unwittingly America to reveal itself. Baldwin calls upon America to acknowledge its "legend."

Analyze the following: "Every legend . . . contains its residuum of truth, and the root function of language is to control the universe by describing it. It is of quite considerable significance that black men remain, in the imagination, and in overwhelming numbers in fact, beyond the disciplines of salvation; and this despite the fact that the West has been 'buying' African natives for centuries. There is, I should hazard, an instantaneous necessity to be divorced from this so visible unsaved stranger, in whose heart, moreover, one cannot guess what dreams of vengeance are being nourished; and, at the same time, there are few things on earth more attractive than the idea of the unspeakable liberty which is allowed the unredeemed. When, beneath the black mask, a human being begins to make himself felt one cannot escape a certain awful wonder as to what kind of human being it is. What one's imagination makes of other people is dictated, of course, by the laws of one's own personality and it is one of the ironies of black-white relations that, by means of what the white man imagines the black man to be, the black man is enabled to know who the white man is."

What does Baldwin mean when he states that "Americans attempt until today to make an abstraction of the Negro"? On what, according to Baldwin, does the idea of white supremacy rests? What does that idea have to do with "language"? What are, according to Baldwin, the motives of white men for embracing white supremacy? What is, according to Baldwin, the singularly unique task of the African American with regard to his identity? How has the "interracial drama acted out on the American continent" created "a new white man"?

In Chapter Six, **Jennifer Jordan** proffers a view of Baldwin and his works. For a variety of tributes to Baldwin, one is referred to **James Baldwin: The Legacy**, edited by Quincy Troupe.

AMIRI BARAKA, "THE NEGRO AS NON-AMERICAN: SOME BACKGROUNDS"; "THE NEGRO AS PROPERTY"; and "AFRICAN SLAVES/AMERICAN SLAVES: THEIR MUSIC."

The connection between Baldwin's essay and **Amira Baraka's** essays taken from his groundbreaking socioaesthetic history of black music *Blues People: Negro Music in White America* (1963) is clear. Baraka was born on October 7, 1934, in Newark, New Jersey, and named at birth Everett LeRoy Jones. Having graduated with honors from Barringer High School in 1951, he attended Howard University where he was immensely influenced by Professors Sterling Allen Brown with whom he examined the blues; E. Franklin Frazier whose classic work on the black middle-class, *Black Bourgeoisie*, influenced his views on the values of the black middle-class; and Nathan A. Scott with whom he studied literature. Unfortunately, Baraka flunked out of Howard in his senior year and joined the United States Air Force. It was in the military that Baraka began to engage himself seriously in the art of writing. Unable to fit himself into the discipline-mold of the military, Baraka was dishonorably discharged in 1957 and moved to Greenwich Village in New York City where his intellectual development and art began to take shape under the tutelage of post-Second World War avant-garde writers such as Allen Ginsberg and Charles Olson. Playwright, poet, essayist, and political activist, Baraka was a driving force in the Blacks Arts Movement of the 1960s. He came to national attention with his play *Dutchman* (1964) and remains today a powerful and influential voice in the study of African-American culture. In 1987 he received the American Book Award for Lifetime Achievement.

While Baraka explores in the essays reprinted in the *Reader* the "nonmaterial" aspects of African culture which had not been eradicated by slavery and the Euro-Americans, he joins Baldwin in pointing out how differently the African American and the Euro-American have seen and see the world; how the African's "nonhumanity" was essential for his condition in the New World and how this New World became his own.

What, according to Baraka, is the result of the forging of unforgotten parts of African culture and the "weight of the stepculture"?

JOHN OLIVER KILLENS, "THE BLACK WRITER VIS-À-VIS HIS COUNTRY."

Certainly, this new race has advantages in many respects, for, as **John Oliver Killens** maintains in his essay **"The Black Writer vis-à-vis His Country,"** it might well be up to black folk, "Negro artists," to bring about a cultural revolution, given that they "know America better than she knows herself" and that "the Negro remembers better than anybody else the American dream, deferred and forgotten by most Americans." Why? "[B]ecause he lives constantly the dream's negation, yet lives for the day when the dream will become a reality."

Born on January 14, 1916, in Macon, Georgia, Killens was introduced early to the harsh realities of the

South and racial prejudice. To his credit, Killens participated in the 1955 bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama. His novels *Youngblood* (1954), *And Then We Heard the Thunder* (1963), *Sippi* (1967) and *The Cotillion; or, One Good Bull Is Half the Herd* (1971) explore the effects of racism on the African American. In "The Black Writer vis-à-vis His Country," Killens, the essayist, maintains that American racism has not only denied the African American the realization of the dream to which all Americans are entitled, but, in his call for a cultural revolution, challenges writers, especially black writers, to "uninvent the Negro."

What does Killens mean? What is, according to Killens and Ralph Ellison, the importance of the presence of African Americans to America? What, in fact, would America be like without African Americans? This is the question which Ralph Ellison addresses in his essay "What America Would Be Like Without Blacks."

RALPH ELLISON, "WHAT AMERICA WOULD BE LIKE WITHOUT BLACKS."

Author of the classic novel *Invisible Man*, **Ralph Ellison** was born in 1914 in Oklahoma City. Having attended Tuskegee Institute where, incidentally, he met and befriended critic, essayist, and author Albert Murray, Ellison moved to New York City in 1936. There he began his career as a writer. After a stint in the Merchant Marine during the Second World War, Ellison carved out seven years of his life to write and refine *Invisible Man* (1952) which received the National Book Award. According to reports, a second novel had been written, and Ellison had spent the entire summer of 1967 refining it. However, the manuscript was destroyed when the home which Ellison and his wife Fanny had occupied burned to the ground. Devastated and virtually unable to remember all of the revisions which he had made during the summer, Ellison became despondent and somewhat withdrawn. Ellison's career as novelist and essayist was and is still of extraordinary importance to his nation and his people. His influential essays collected in *Shadow and Act* (1964) and *Going to the Territory* (1986) provide singular insight into the author's views on American culture and race. On the condition of the African American, Ellison inscribed stoically in his essay "The World and the Jug" (1963) that he wrote from "an American Negro tradition which teaches one to deflect racial provocation and to master and contain pain. It is a tradition which abhors as obscene any trading on one's own anguish for gain and sympathy; which springs not from a desire to deny the harshness of existence but from a will to deal with it as men at their best have always done." (See "Epilogue" from *Invisible Man* reprinted in Chapter Nine.)

TONI CADE BAMBARA, "DEEP SIGHT AND RESCUE MISSIONS."

This Study Guide concludes with an introduction to **Toni Cade Bambara** and her essay "Deep Sight and Rescue Missions"—an essay taken by the *Reader* - editor from a collection of Bambara's unpublished works entitled *Deep Sightings and Rescue Missions* which was edited by Toni Morrison. Bambara, who died in 1995 at the age of 56, was born Toni Cade on March 25, 1939, in New York City. She acquired the name "Bambara," having found it in a sketchbook tucked away in her great-grandmother's trunk. Bambara attended Queens College and earned the B. A. degree in theater arts and English literature. While

pursuing graduate studies in American literature at City College of New York, eventually earning the M.A. degree, Bambara was employed as a social worker for the Harlem Welfare Center. An activist scholar and educator, Bambara held teaching positions at City College of New York, Livingston College in New Jersey, Rutgers University, Spelman College, and Duke University. In Atlanta, Georgia, where she and her daughter lived from 1974 until 1986, Bambara cultivated and mentored emerging writers. Additionally, she was instrumental in the creation of the Southern Collective of African American Writers. Essayist, writer of fiction, filmmaker, political activist, Bambara is perhaps best known for her novel, *The Salt Eaters* (1980), her collections of short stories, entitled *Gorilla, My Love* (1972) and *The Sea Birds Are Still Alive* (1977), as well as a collection of essays entitled *The Black Woman* (1970).

Bambara's essay "Deep Sight and Rescue Missions" affords the reader an opportunity to witness the breadth of her scope as she explores the topic of assimilation vis-à-vis America. To put it succinctly, it boils down to either assimilation or emancipation. During her bus-ride from the dentist office to home, Bambara ponders, as she considers the messages found in Paule Marshall's novel *Praisesong for the Widow*, Julie Dash's film *Daughters of the Dust*, and David Taylor's film *Drop Squad*, the following questions for which we must also provide answers:

Does the African American "cataract" the gift of "deep-sight vision" of the Africans who, having stepped in chains onto the sands of the New World and seen what the enslavers had in store for them, "turned around and walked all the way home on the water to the motherland"? Does the African American forget to remember and give into amnesia in order to take up "an inauthentic life"? If so, how should he or she be deprogrammed? How is assimilation synonymous with citizenship training? What is Anthony (Buffalo Boy) Jackson's view on the question posed to him about assimilation?

Finally at home, Bambara considers what "double-consciousness" and "invisibility" in the contemporary context are, how the "basic dualism" abridged in the "demonic model," provided by Bambara, permeates the basic values and the life of America. Frustrated that what she wanted to say could not be said through her own family experiences, Bambara turned to a "faux" family to present her ruminations on the topic "assimilation" and presented the family options in "War One," "War Two," and "War Three."

What is, according to Bambara, "white sight"?

Bambara's assessment of the present and past state of the African-American condition is cataract-less: "accommodation, opportunism, denial/flight, and resistance" -- conditions for which she offers "living examples." She asks that we consider all; however, in one she offers the rescue.



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Chapter Five

Study Guide

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INTRODUCTION

The story of the *Amistad* is well known by now as a result of the collaboration of Steven Spielberg and Debbie Allen on the film *Amistad*. The story does not have to be retold; however, some dates and events should be recited for the reader. On June 28, 1839, the Spanish schooner *Amistad* sailed from Havana to Port Principe, Cuba. Four nights into the voyage, Cinque and his comrades managed to free themselves from their shackles and proceeded to attack and kill the schooner's captain and all of the crew, with the exception of Ruiz and Montez. It was the hope of the Africans that they could force Ruiz and Montez to sail them back to Africa. Having run out of provisions after almost two months of Ruiz' and Montez' treachery, Cinque and several of his comrades went ashore near Montauk Point on Long Island, New York, in the hopes of replenishing their supplies. It was not long before the United States Navy seized the schooner. Cinque and his fellow Africans were taken to New Haven, Connecticut, where they were imprisoned to await trial before the Circuit Court. There was much legal maneuvering between America and Spain which claimed as its property the *Amistad* and its "cargo." It was former President of the United States and then a Congressman from Massachusetts John Quincy Adams who argued successfully the case on behalf of Cinque and the other captured Africans before the United States Supreme Court. Liberation came to Cinque and his fellow Africans in 1842.

"FURTHER PARTICULARS CONCERNING THE SCHOONER AMISTAD" and "THE AFRICAN PRISONERS."

Chapter Five opens with a reprint of a letter which appeared in the *New London Gazette* in 1839 in response to concerns expressed by newspapers that they had not received a full account of the capture of the schooner Amistad. In addition, reprinted is a letter of gratitude from Don Jose Ruiz and Don Pedro Montez who had been held hostage by Cinque and his companions on the Amistad, as well as one to the "committee on behalf of the African Prisoners," written by Andrew J. Judson, Judge of the United States for the District of Connecticut. In his letter to the "committee," Judson, having conducted an inquiry on board the American brig in New London harbor and having heard testimony of Ruiz and Montez, gives a stunningly accurate and unbiased description of Cinque and his fellow captives and the circumstances of their capture. Having examined Amistad's documents, the circumstances, and the prisoners, Judson finds that the story of the Spaniards could be substantiated; that the Amistad was a slave ship; that it was legally authorized to transport the slaves from Havana to Puerto Principe; that the slaves had "mutinied"; and that the slaves, given the "facts," were guilty of piracy and murder. Thereupon, Judson orders the prisoners to appear before the Circuit Court of the United States at Hartford, Connecticut, to answer the charges of the murder of Ramon Ferrer, captain of the Amistad, on the 17th of September 1839. This order was issued to United States Marshal Norris Willcox who, among other things, was given the responsibility of the care of the captives. Additionally, Judson indicated that the court would rule on the matter of property claims presented by Ruiz and Montez. The latter portion of the letter is Judson's response to an article written by "Veto" which appeared in the New York *Evening Post*. It is perhaps the most interesting, for, in it, Judson advances his views relative to the case. "Veto" was in fact Theodore Sedgwick, the defense attorney for the Amistad captives who had used the pseudonym not only in the *Evening Post*, but also in the *Emancipator*, a publication of the American Antislavery Society.

American abolitionists became extremely interested in the Amistad case, for, in their opinion, if challenged publicly, the evils of slavery and the slave trade would be discussed in the light of day. It would also afford them an opportunity to address issues of human and property rights, as well as the relationship of morality to law. The abolitionists knew that a difficult road lay ahead. Judson was known as an anti-abolitionist and a racist, as well as politically ambitious. On the other hand, Judson realized that the abolitionists intended to bring before the court and the public the issues of the slave trade and the rights of man. He was also not unaware that the President Martin Van Buren's administration wanted this case resolved in favor of Spain, and he was cognizant of the popular sympathy on behalf of the Amistad captives. He also knew that any ruling which he rendered could be reversed by the United States Supreme Court, and that could prove embarrassing to him both politically and legally. Given the above, Judson began looking for an escape route, wanting neither to offend President Van Buren, nor the supporters of the Amistad captives.

The captives' attorneys' initial intention was to convince the court that it lacked jurisdiction in a case "where natural law [would be] the guiding principle and that there was nothing to warrant a grand-jury indictment for either murder or piracy" (Jones, 63). In addition, they tried to obtain a separate writ of *habeas corpus* for three of the young female captives. If this request were granted, then that would oblige the prosecution to bring formal charges against the three girls or compel the court to excuse them from appearing as witnesses in the case. The writ would also serve as a license to air the entire question of human and property rights in relationship to slavery. The abolitionists concluded that, if they could demonstrate that the three female captives could not be held legally, they could expand the argument to include the other captives. Further, they believed that, if the captives were declared human beings and not property, then all claims for the restoration of "property" would be moot, and the captives would be released. The abolitionists' first step was to seek a writ of *habeas corpus* to show cause for not freeing the captives. For a more indepth study of the legal story, one should consult Howard Jones' *Mutiny on the Amistad* (Oxford, 1987).

While the story is that of the emancipation of Cinque and his fellow captives, the Amistad case became an important legal struggle at whose heart is the core issue: *Can slavery be tolerated in a country ostensibly founded on the proposition that all men are created equal?* It was this question to which Lewis Tappan, a founder of the American Antislavery Society, and John Quincy Adams, an anti-"slaveocratist," who served as the nation's sixth president from 1824 until 1828, wanted to provide a clear answer. As a matter of fact, it was Tappan who persuaded Adams to co-defend, together with Roger S. Baldwin, Cinque and his fellow captives. In 1841 the United States Supreme Court decided to hear the case. Tappan opened for the defense; Adams closed for the defense. It has been reported that Adams' closing remarks were extraordinary powerful. One must know also that in 1841 five Southerners sat on the Supreme Court, including Chief Justice Roger Brooke Taney, who, incidentally, wrote the majority opinion in the Dred Scott case (s. *Reader* , 91), rejecting Scott's claim to freedom. Fortunately, one of the Southerners became ill and could not participate; another died on the evening of the day on which Adams concluded his four-and-a-half-hour defense. Adams joined Tappan in questioning the jurisdiction of the Court in deciding the fate of human beings who, albeit considered by some to be slaves, were free in the state of New York. On March 9, 1841, Associate Justice Joseph Story delivered the majority opinion of the Court, addressing the question, namely whether unlawfully seized free human beings, who had emancipated themselves and who had exercised a natural right to "resist oppression, and to apply force against ruinous injustice," could have imported themselves "here as slaves, or for sale as slaves." The answer was "no," and Cinque and his fellow captives were freed and permitted to return to Sierra Leone—three years after their "departure" from Africa.

"TO THE UNION CONVENTION OF TENNESSEE ASSEMBLED IN THE CAPITOL AT NASHVILLE, JANUARY 9TH, 1865" and LETTERS DATED SEPTEMBER 3, 1864, AND JANUARY 9TH, 1865, FROM SPOTSWOOD RICE.

The chapter ends with an impassioned petition inscribed by "American citizens of African descent, natives and residents of Tennessee," dated January 9, 1865, to the **Union Convention of Tennessee**, to abolish completely and constitutionally slavery and all of its limitations. In this petition, the signers lay claim to their freedom, as does Spotswood Rice, a black soldier in the Union Army, in his letters to his children and the woman who "owned" one of them, lay claim to the "ownership" of his children. The first set of documents provides evidence of the African's quest for freedom before he was actually enslaved; the second set provides evidence of the once enslaved African fighting for his freedom and that of his children.

In his book the *Negro's Civil War*, James M McPherson reminds us that the Union had begun enlisting African Americans late in 1862, and that this effort was of significant importance to the outcome of the Civil War. Initially, during the first year of the war, the Federal Government had declined the use of African Americans as soldiers; however, Frederick Douglass and many others continuously put pressure on the government and President Lincoln to allow African Americans to fight as soldiers in the Union Army. In *Douglass' Monthly* (Vol. V, August 1863), Frederick Douglass states: "Once let the black man get upon his person the brass letters, U. S., let him get an eagle on his button, and a musket on his shoulder and bullets in his pocket, and there is no power on earth which can deny that he has earned the right to citizenship in the United States." Of that "power" the politicians were afraid. But there were other concerns, namely most in the North believed that ex-slaves were not good candidates for war and would prove themselves to be cowards. Spotswood Rice and thousands of African Americans proved, however, the contrary. Their efforts on behalf of their people brought a kind of nobility—a moral imperative—to the Union cause. When the recruitment of African-American soldiers ceased in April 1865, there were 166 African-American regiments, of which 145 were infantry, seven cavalry; twelve heavy artillery, one light artillery, and one engineer. It has been documented that approximately 186,000 African Americans had enlisted in the Union army.

Sandwiched between the aforementioned sets of documents are selections from three "redefining" narratives. In response to Henry Dumas' statement "They failed to ask my name and called me negro," three men, confronted by the conditions of the "peculiar institution," demonstrate how new lives were forged—how, in the case of Equiano, snatched from Africa and enslaved, and in the cases of Douglass and Washington, born into American slavery, redefined themselves.

THE INTERSTING NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF OLAUDAH EQUIANO, OR GUSTAVUS VASSA, THE AFRICAN; BY HIMSELF

Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African, was born in Benin into the Ibo tribe in the late eighteenth century, probably around 1745. He was kidnapped and enslaved at the age of 10. His narrative, which appeared in English in 1789, is important, for it, among other things, reveals the horrors of the slave ship from the enslaved's perspective. In 1755 Equiano arrived in Barbados—often the first stop for many slaves, for it was in Barbados where the so-called “seasoning” began. “Seasoning”—making docile—was one of the many creative practices used to make the enslaved “fit” for what the European-Americans had in store for them. However, it was in Virginia that Equiano observed and recorded for us the conditions under which a black female slave had to work in the kitchen and had to endure the so-called “iron muzzle,” and how he had been called “Jacob” in Virginia and “Michael” on board the ship *African Snow*. Subsequently, Equiano was purchased by Captain Michael Henry Pascal. The selection of Equiano's Narrative here covers the period 1755-1758 -- the period immediately after his arrival in Barbados which recounts his experiences aboard ship with his “master.” In 1766 Equiano purchased his freedom for 40 pounds and continued to work as a seaman on board ship. After a life of adventure, much of which was at sea, Equiano returned to London in 1777 and took up the campaign to abolish slavery. He served as a commissary for the Sierra Leone resettlement project and published in 1789 his *Narrative*. He died at the age of 52 in 1797.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS, LIFE AND TIMES OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS WRITTEN BY HIMSELF

On May 28, 1845, the first of **Frederick Douglass' three autobiographies**, *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: An American Slave* was published and became almost immediately a bestseller. By 1847, more than 11,000 copies had been sold. By 1850, 30,000 copies had been sold in America and abroad. An enhanced version entitled *My Bondage and My Freedom* appeared in 1855; however, the third, *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, published in 1881 and revised in 1892, remains for many the classic version. All recount Douglass' enslavement and his escape to freedom; however, it is the last version in which Douglass affords the reader “deep sight” into his intellectual development as well as into the psychology of the enslaver.

Douglass was born into slavery in Tuckahoe on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, as Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey in 1818, the son of an enslaved woman and a white man. In the 1845 version, Douglass identifies his father as “my master,” perhaps referring to Thomas Auld; however, in the 1881 version, he relates, “Of my father, I know nothing.” This was an intended move on Douglass' part, for he did not want his intellect imputed to the fact that his father was white. While still in bondage, Douglass had taught himself to read and write and had begun to realize the power of language—to define, undefine, redefine, and to effect change.

Having been sold and traded to a number of different "owners," Douglass escaped and fled to the North in 1838, immediately sent for and married Anna Murray, a free black woman whom he had met while he was a member of a black "improvement society" in Baltimore. Douglass remains virtually silent on his relationship with either his first wife or Helen Pitts, a white graduate of Mount Holyoke and his secretary in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds (Washington, D. C.) whom he married in January 1884. However, he does remark that Anna, "[w]hile it is true that [she] never learned to read and write, she was the source and strength of all my success in the formative and as well as the maturing years of my life, a companion who was truly a helpmate."

Orator, abolitionist, newspaper publisher, and author, Douglass became the most influential black man of 19th-century America. His career as an orator in the cause of freedom for his people began before a racially integrated audience on August 11, 1841, at a meeting of the Massachusetts Antislavery Society on Nantucket. It is here where Douglass came to the attention of William Lloyd Garrison, an abolitionist, who persuaded Douglass who, at that time, still went by the name of Bailey, to join the Massachusetts Antislavery Society. The publication of his first autobiography resulted in Douglass' having to go into exile in England for two years to avoid capture by slave catchers. However, Douglass was able to return to the United States after British supporters had "purchased" his freedom. Upon his return he began to publish *The North Star*, an abolitionist paper, the motto of which was "Right is of no sex. . . Truth is of no color ... God is the Father of us all, and we are all Brethren." The "agitator" Douglass saw the Civil War as an opportunity for a moral crusade to emancipate his people. However, even before there was a whiff of gunpowder, Douglass kept the issue of emancipation on the national table. In a speech delivered on July 5, 1852, Douglass shocked some and inspired many on "The Meaning of July 4th for the American Negro:

What to the American slave is your Fourth of July? I answer: a day

that reveals to him, more than all the other days of the

year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant

victim. . . . To him, your celebration is a sham. . . a thin veil to

cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages.

There is not a nation of the earth guilty of practices more

shocking and bloody than are the people of the United States.

Fellow citizens, I will not enlarge further on your national

inconsistencies. The existence of slavery in this country brands your republicanism as a sham, your humanity as a base pretense, and your Christianity as a lie. It destroys your moral power abroad; it corrupts your politicians at home. It saps the foundation of religion; it makes your name a hissing and a byword to a mocking earth. It is the antagonistic force in your government, the only thing that seriously disturbs and endangers your Union. It fetters your progress, it is the enemy of improvement; the deadly foe of education; it fosters pride; it breeds indolence; it promotes vice; it shelters crime; it is a curse of the earth that supports it; and yet you cling to it as if it were the sheet anchor of all your hopes.

He doggedly persisted in calling upon President Lincoln to free the slaves and to recruit blacks for the Union army. He conducted rallies, published appeals in newspapers owned by free blacks, and served as a recruiting agent for the Federal Government. He is credited with having assisted in recruiting black soldiers for the Massachusetts 54th and 55th Regiments. He was an advisor to Lincoln throughout the Civil War and sought constitutional guarantees for the rights of blacks which resulted in the 13th Amendment, banning slavery, the 14th Amendment, granting citizenship to all born in the United States, and the 15th Amendment, guaranteeing the right to vote to all males over the age of 21. Thus began one of the most remarkable public lives in American history. Having served as Recorder of Deeds for Washington, D. C.; Marshall of the District of Washington; and Minister General to the Republic of Haiti, Douglass began again to lecture nationally, condemning lynching and Jim Crowism which sought to limit the rights won constitutionally for African Americans. In addition to his many positions, Douglass also served on the Board of Trustees of Howard University for twenty-five years. Tireless, Douglass expanded his crusade for civil rights by championing women's rights by attending in 1848 a convention of women's suffragettes. As a matter of fact, it was on February 10, 1895, having participated in a meeting of women's suffrage, that Douglass collapsed and died.

The selection from Douglass' *Life and Times* is one in which he articulates clearly his belief that the will to power is the will to write and his belief that the path to freedom, the enormous leap which he and many others made or would have to make, was inextricably linked to literary.

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON, "THE STRUGGLE FOR AN EDUCATION."

Booker T. Washington's views on liberal education and what he called "practical knowledge" are widely known and have been discussed in a previous study guide. The selection "**The Struggle for an Education**," taken from his autobiography *Up from Slavery* (1901), recounts Washington's efforts in obtaining an education at Hampton Institute. One is struck by his admission, namely that "[t]he older I grow, the more I am convinced that there is no education which one can get from books and costly apparatus that is equal to that which can be gotten from contact with great men and women. Instead of studying books so constantly, how I wish that our schools and colleges might learn to study men and things!" Washington believed that the path to "freedom" for African Americans could be realized through education in the crafts and industrial skills, as well as in the cultivation of the virtues of patience and thrift. He urged his fellow African Americans, mostly poor and illiterate farm laborers, to forego their efforts on achieving full civil rights and to concentrate their efforts on attaining economic security through industrial and farming skills. The odious deal which Washington presented to his fellow black citizens was to accept segregation and discrimination, for their rewards, if they acquired wealth and culture, would be the respect and acceptance of the white community. For many years, Washington was for white America the African-American community's spokesman. It was Washington's acceptance of segregation, his accommodationist positions, as well as those relative to the irrelevance of university education for blacks, which drew the ire of Du Bois and other leaders of the African-American community. In his now famous speech delivered on September 18, 1895, to a racially mixed audience at the Cotton States' Exposition held in Atlanta and called by Du Bois the "Atlanta Compromise," Washington consoled the South by assuring it that "you and your families will be surrounded by the most patient, faithful, law-abiding, and unresentful people the world has seen." He concluded his remarks by saying that "[i]n all things that are purely social we can be separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress." While he advised his fellow black citizens to accept segregation, Washington often traveled in private railroad cars and stayed in fine hotels and dined at the White House with Theodore Roosevelt and his family, which many whites felt was a breach of racial etiquette.

Born into slavery on April 15, 1856, in Franklin County, Virginia, Washington and his family moved to Malden, West Virginia, after emancipation. Too poor to attend school, nine-year-old Washington began working in a salt furnace and later in a coal mine. This is where our reading selection begins—at the point at which he decides to attend Hampton Institute. He graduated from Hampton in 1875 and returned to

Malden to assume a teaching position which he held for two years. Having completed studies at Wayland Seminary in Washington, D. C., in 1879, he joined the faculty of Hampton. In 1881 he left Hampton to undertake the establishment of Tuskegee Normal School in Alabama, later named Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute. He and his projects were funded by Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller.

While delivering a speech in New York City in October 1915, Washington collapsed and was hospitalized. Sensing that death was imminent, he requested that he be returned to Tuskegee where he died.



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INTRODUCTION

The lives of eight extraordinary African Americans – two scientists, a political activist, an artist, a writer of the Harlem Renaissance, an author-essayist, a literary critic-scholar-teacher, and a lawyer – are placed before the reader. They are representatives of a people who, through their singular efforts, have made major contributions to America.

HARRIET JACKSON SCARIUPA, "W. MONTAGUE COBB: HIS LONG, STORIED, BATTLE-SCARRED LIFE"

Harriet Jackson Scarupa, a former writer for the Howard University magazine *New Directions* and presently special assistant to the mayor of the city of Baltimore, provides the reader with a luminous essay on the life and times of **W. Montague Cobb** (1904-1990) who, according to Michael L. Blakey, professor of anthropology at Howard University, is regarded as the leading pioneer in correcting the "widespread distortion and neglect of medical and racial problems facing Afro-America between 1930 and the present day." Cobb was the sole African-American physical anthropologist who held the Ph.D. degree prior to the Korean War. Cobb had a distinguished career as scholar/teacher, having authored more than 1,000 publications and taught over 6,000 students of anatomy. During the period 1932-1936, Cobb established the Laboratory of Anatomy and Physical Anthropology in the Medical School at Howard University. In this laboratory he assembled systematically and prepared not only the skeletons of cadavers from the anatomy dissecting facility, but also the anatomical, demographic, and medical records of the individuals whose remains he collected. According to Blakey, Cobb's efforts resulted in a human biology research collection of anatomical records of 987 individuals and the preservation of more than 700 skeletons on which exists comprehensive documentation. He chaired the Department of Anatomy in the College of Medicine at Howard from 1947 until the "'69 Protest." In 1969 Howard University conferred upon him the title of Distinguished Professor of Anatomy—the first ever conferred, and he held the title Distinguished Professor *emeritus* from 1973 -- the year in which he retired—until his death in 1990. In honor of Cobb's tireless efforts in the field of physical anthropology, the Cobb Laboratory was re-established in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology in the College of Arts and Sciences at Howard. Its director is Dr. Blakey, and in it research is presently being conducted on the remains of the African Burial Grounds discovered several years ago in New York City.

KENNETH R. MANNING, "ERNEST EVERETT JUST: THE BEGINNING OF A PROFESSIONAL CAREER, 1907-1916."

In 1983 **Kenneth R. Manning** published the much acclaimed biography on Ernest Everett Just, entitled *Black Apollo of Science: The Life of Ernest Everett Just*. This extraordinary work won the Pfizer Award and the Lucy Hamton Bostick Award and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. Manning is presently the Thomas Meloy Professor of Rhetoric at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). Having received his A.B. and Ph.D. degrees from Harvard University in 1974 and 1979, respectively, Manning joined the faculty of MIT. The reading selection provided in the *Reader* illumines the early stages of Just's remarkable career as zoologist, biologist, physiologist, and research scientist.

Just was born on August 14, 1883, in Charleston, South Carolina. Having completed a course of study at Kimball Hall Academy in New Hampshire, he enrolled in Dartmouth College and graduated *magna cum laude* in 1907. Almost immediately, he began teaching at Howard University. For several summers,

commencing in 1909, Just worked as a research assistant for Professor Frank Rattray Lillie, Director of the Marine Biological Laboratory at Woods Hole, Massachusetts. Having completed his course work and submitted a dissertation entitled "Studies of Fertilization in *Platynereis megalops*," Just received in 1916 from the University of Chicago the Ph.D. degree in experimental embryology. From 1920 until 1931, Just was the Julius Rosenwald Fellow in Biology of the National Research Council. As a Rosenwald Fellow, Just continued his research as an adjunct researcher at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Biology (Berlin-Dahlem). Just's legacy lay in his contributions to the field of the physiology of development. His research on fertilization, hydration, dehydration in living cells, experimental parthenogenesis, as well as the effects of ultra-violet rays in augmenting chromosome numbers in animals and in altering the organization of the egg helped cement Just's reputation among the community of scientists and scholars.

MILTON VIORST, "E. D. NIXON: THE NEW EXPECTATIONS."

Among the great African-American men and women are not merely scholars, artists, and teachers, but are men and women, albeit unlettered, of great ability, courage, and wisdom. Such an individual was **E. D. Nixon**. Not widely known or acknowledged, it was E. D. Nixon, a Pullman car porter, who suggested to "Brother" Martin Luther King Jr., the Montgomery Bus boycott. **Milton Viorst** provides the reader with a vivid portrait of this wise and courageous man. Viorst has been a reporter at *The Washington Post* and *The New York Post*, and has written for *Esquire*, *The New York Times Magazine* and other periodicals, traveling widely on assignments both in the United States and abroad. He is the author of *Hostile Allies: FDR and Charles de Gaulle*; *Fall from Grace: The Republican Party and the Puritan Ethic*; and *Hustlers and Heroes: An American Political Panorama*. *Fire in the Streets* (1977), from which the reading selection is taken, is the story of how Americans for the first time took to the streets by the thousands, sometimes by the tens of thousands, to resolve disputes once left to the established governmental process. *Fire in the Streets* is the dramatic account of the sequence of events, the range of ideas, the diversity of personalities, and the natures of the explosive confrontations which made up the richness and complexity of the period. Additionally, it is about how political change, effectuated during the '60s, has remained a permanent pillar of American society and cultural history—a history in which E. D. Nixon played a significant role.

TRITOBIA HAYES BENJAMIN, "A RICH LEGACY: LOIS MAILOU JONES AND THE HOWARD YEARS."

With the death of **Lois Mailou Jones** on June 9, 1998, the world of the visual arts is now bereft of one of its major artists. **Tritobia Hayes Benjamin**, professor of art history, associate dean for the fine arts, and director of the Gallery of Art at Howard University, has published the definitive book on Jones, the title of which is *The Life and Art of Lois Mailou Jones*. With Dr. Benjamin's kind permission, the editor has included the chapter from the book which discusses the artist's career at Howard University.

Lois Mailou Jones was born on November 3, 1905, in Boston, Massachusetts. (For the following biographical information, we are indebted to Dr. Benjamin's research and book.) Because of her interest in painting and drawing, Jones' parents enrolled her in the High School of Practical Arts, where she was an exemplary student, winning four consecutive scholarships from 1919 until 1923 to the vocational drawing classes at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Having completed her secondary education at the High School of Practical Arts in 1923, Jones continued to pursue a course of study in the visual arts at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. For four consecutive years, her studies were supported by the Susan Minot Lane Scholarship in Design. While at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Jones began to study design in the evening at the Boston Normal Arts School from which she received a certificate in 1927 – the same year in which she graduated with honors from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts. Awarded yet another scholarship, Jones pursued graduate studies in design at the Designers Art School of Boston with Ludwig Frank who was an internationally acclaimed textile designer. Jones' designs were widely used; however, she became concerned that they brought her no individual recognition. Thus, she decided to concentrate on the fine arts. Jones' life took yet another turn when she met Charlotte Hawkins Brown, founder and director of the Palmer Memorial Institute, which had a high school division in Sedalia, North Carolina. Having convinced Brown to create a department of art at Palmer, Jones began teaching and remained there until 1930. It was in 1930 that she was recruited by James Vernon Herring, founder and chairman of the Department of Art at Howard University, to join its faculty.

Jones' pursuits and career took her to many parts of the world. Specifically, she traveled to Paris where she honed her skills as a painter, preparing herself for the major career which she soon realized—a career which, encouraged by Alain LeRoy Locke, compelled her to abandon temporarily the still lifes of Paris and Impressionism for the images of her people—a career which sustained her, her students, and her nation until her death.

CALVIN H. SINNETTE, "RUDOLPH FISHER: HARLEM RENAISSANCE PHYSICIAN-WRITER."

Rudolph Fisher, considered by Langston Hughes to be "the wittiest" of the Harlem Renaissance writers, used the printed page to paint the streets and crowded tenements of Harlem. Yes, among the greats of the so-called Harlem Renaissance—Langston Hughes, Jean Toomer, Nella Larsen, Zora Neale Hurston, Claude McKay, and Countee Cullen—was Rudolph Fisher. Not only was Fisher an accomplished writer of fiction, he was also a scientist, a physician, trained at Howard University. **Calvin H. Sinnette**, a retired physician, has provided a luminous account of Fisher's life and works. In Chapter Nine of the *Reader*, one will find Fisher's essay "The Caucasian Storm Harlem" and will be moved by its sharp and surgeon's incisive assessment of the relationship of whites to things black.

JENNIFER JORDAN, "JAMES BALDWIN: A VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS."

Jennifer Jordan's essay "James Baldwin: A Voice in the Wilderness" has been referred to in our decision inscribed in the Study Guide for Chapter Four. Jordan is an associate professor of English in the Department of English at Howard. It is clear from his works that, through his voice and sharp mind, Baldwin has cleared and made sense of the "wilderness."

E. ETHELBERT MILLER, "STEPHEN E. HENDERSON:

A CONVERSATION WITH A LITERARY CRITIC."

On the heels of Jordan's essay, is an interview conducted by **E. Ethelbert Miller** with **Stephen E. Henderson**. Henderson, through his critical studies, has brought critical clarity to contemporary black poetry. In this interview, which was conducted before his death in 1997, one will learn what an important role Henderson played in our understanding and appreciating African-American literature.

Henderson was born in 1925 in Key West, Florida. Having earned the B.A. degree in English and sociology at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Henderson pursued graduate studies in English and art history at the University of Wisconsin from which he received the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees. A teacher /scholar of exemplary ability, Henderson held several posts, serving as professor of English at Virginia Union University; chairman of the Department of English at Morehouse; Senior Research Fellow at The Institute of the Black World (Atlanta); professor of Afro-American Studies and professor of English at Howard University; and Director of the Institute for the Arts and Humanities also at Howard. Henderson is the author of the timeless and acclaimed anthology *Understanding the New Black Poetry: Black Speech and Black Music as Poetic References* and, together with Mercer Cook, co-authored the book *The Militant Black Writer: In Africa and the*

U. S. A. A recipient of countless honors and awards and contributor to many academic and popular publications, Henderson helped define a new black aesthetic for African-American writers and scholars and provided, through his scholarly work, an understanding of contemporary African-American poetry and its jazz and blues underpinnings.

One should observe what the role of the teacher of any subject should be. What is Henderson's opinion on Black culture and education, and what does he see on the Black agenda for the 1990s? Why is it, according to him, frightening?

MICHAEL R. WINSTON, "JAMES MADISON NABRIT JR."

James Madison Nabrit Jr., who with others assisted the late Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall and the Legal Defense Fund of the NAACP in preparing the arguments for *Brown v. Board of Education*, is credited with having developed, while a faculty member in the Law School of Howard University, the first law school course on civil rights. **Michael R. Winston**, professor *emeritus* of history, former director of the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, former vice president for academic affairs at Howard University, and presently, president of The Alfred Harcourt Foundation, captures brilliantly in his essay "James Madison Nabrit, Jr." the essence of the professional life of this extraordinary man. In Winston's essay, one will certainly recognize how the time in which Nabrit was born and matured had shaped his quests for justice for his people. His people, generations of lawyers and legal scholars, and the nation, which delayed and deferred the "dreams" of the African American, are eternally in Nabrit's debt.



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INTRODUCTION

The reading selections in Chapter Seven provide answers to a number of important queries which have been posed regarding the African American's place in this nation. The questions of the African American's intelligence; his alleged inferiority; affirmative action, his responses to what Toni Morrison labeled in her Charter Day Address as "the myths of racial superiority," recycled by white racists, are scrupulously investigated by the African-American as well as Euro-American essayists in this Chapter. The selections further confirm Du Bois' now famous, almost ten-decades-old prophecy that the problem of the twentieth century would be that of the color line. It is this line, as we near the new millennium, on which we still grapple with the contradictions and conflicts in America's treatment of the African American. However, America's treatment of the enslaved African and his/her descendants has provided them an opportunity to "deep-see" the real intentions of those who had enslaved them and of those who today find creative means to deny them full access to all facets of society. Challenged to respond to a myriad attacks on their humanity and the "invisibility" to which they have been assigned, African Americans have kept the debate on race and America's view of itself on the table for public view.

MICHAEL BERUBE, "PUBLIC ACADEMY: A NEW GENERATION OF BLACK THINKERS IS BECOMING THE MOST DYNAMIC FORCE IN THE AMERICAN INTELLECTUAL ARENA SINCE THE FIFTIES."

Of this fact, **Michael Berube**, a specialist in American and African-American literature and professor of English at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, gives evidence in his essay **"Public Academy: A New Generation of Black Thinkers is Becoming the Most Dynamic Force in the American Intellectual Arena Since the Fifties."** It is a generation of scholars, among whom are Cornel West, bell hooks, Henry Louis Gates Jr., and Michael Eric Dyson, who have brought, through their public lectures and publications, important issues relative to race, black nationalism and its limitations, cultural nationalism, black popular culture, and feminism into public forums for debate.

In response to West's observation inscribed in his book *Race Matters*, namely that "[o]ne irony of our present moment is that just as young black men are murdered, maimed, and imprisoned in record numbers, their styles have become disproportionately influential in shaping popular culture," Berube maintains that this new generation of black intellectuals has become "deep-seeing" "interpreters of this moment and its ironies." They have also brought to the table, for example, the debate of Malcolm X's legacy as a black nationalist which, in its impact on black popular culture, has overshadowed that of Martin Luther King Jr.

What does West mean when he says that Malcolm X "feared the culturally hybrid character of black life"? Do you see any similarity between what Dyson maintains is "the greatest irony of contemporary black nationalism" and what Du Bois saw as the problem within the ranks of the Talented Tenth (s. Reader, 14)? Do you discern any similarities between what Berube reports to be West's "pointed critique of American consumer culture" (s. Reader, 368) and Toni Morrison's more severe discussion of the genius of fascism (s. Reader, 162)? Is West's position on the nihilism "that increasingly pervades black communities," as reported in Berube's essay, similar to the observations articulated by Morrison in her Charter Day Address?

In reporting and analyzing the positions of these "left public intellectuals," Berube notes that, while their arguments are sometimes compelling and provocative, they do not always have the impact on public debate which, for example, black conservative intellectual Thomas Sowell has. It has been reported widely that Sowell's research has provided support to the New Right. Thus, Sowell in his book *Race and Culture: A World View* argues, according to Berube, against the notion that intelligence tests are biased against the underprivileged and that performance is independent of variation of economic status within the group. Further, according to Berube, Sowell fails to address conclusively whether poor performances in abstract thinking among "underprivileged groups" are due to neglect or to the lack of capacity. If, as Berube maintains, it is true that groups' differences in performance on intelligence tests are attributable

to neglect, i.e., discrimination, then Sowell has “inadvertently demonstrated the necessity for precisely the kind of ambitious social programs that his career has been dedicated to attacking.” For such inconclusiveness there is, however, no room in the work by Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray which will be discussed below.

At this juncture, one should discern the differences between “cultural politics” and “practical politics” and grapple with Berube’s criticism of the black left public intellectuals’ cultural politics, as well as his understanding of how the work of the black public intellectuals will have broad political consequences.

The book entitled *The Bell Curve*, which was published in 1994 by Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray, seemed to have had frightening broad political consequences. It argued that social and economic success in the American context was and is significantly a matter of genetic determinism and not of education, environment, or any other enhancing intervention which the society might employ. Steeped in racial overtones, the book was greeted with a fair amount of criticism—some from the scientific community. What was particularly unusual was the fact that the authors did not release their statistical data for peer review prior to the book’s publication. It has been argued that, had they done so, the academic community would have had perhaps sufficient time to unravel the veil of distortions evidenced therein, and the book would have arrived dead in the water. However, that was not the intent of the authors; they obviously wanted to profit from the controversy and publicity which the initial press-run yielded. Having had sufficient time to examine carefully the core issues of the book and the authors’ use of statistical tools—tools used to determine whether genetic determinism or environment could reveal why some individuals commit crimes, perform poorly academically, or fall into the ranks of poverty—the scientific community pulled the proverbial rug out from under the book’s wild and dangerous claims. The authors’ theses were (1) that high intelligence leads to success, and (2) family background plays a secondary role.

STEPHEN JAY GOULD, “CURVEBALL.”

Stephen Jay Gould addresses, among other things, the much-talked-about theories of genetic determinism in the matter of intelligence among the races which are inscribed in *The Bell Curve*. A professor of geology and zoology at Harvard University, Gould is regarded widely as the dean of popular science writers. He is twice-winner of the Phi Beta Kappa Science Award, winner of the MacArthur Award, the National Book Award, the National Book Critics Circle Award, and author of the best-selling books *Ever Since Darwin*, *The Panda’s Thumb*, *Bully for Brontosaurus*, *The Flamingo’s Smile*, *Hen’s Teeth and Horse’s Toes*, *Wonderful Life: The Burgess Shale and the Nature of History*, as well as *The Mismeasure of Man* from which the essay “**American Polygeny and Craniometry before Darwin**” is taken. According to Gould and many other nationally recognized scientists, the first major flaw in *The Bell Curve* is the authors’ production and use of biased data to demonstrate that IQ or parental background

status is a better predictor of success. What Herrnstein and Murray failed to take into consideration is that IQ can be easily measured; however, parental background cannot. While the authors provided indices which incorporate the highest level of education which parents achieve, as well as family income and other socioeconomic data, they failed to consider the myriad tangible and intangible components of a child's development. This failure created a bias in the authors' conclusions because, again according to scientists who have examined the tables, the impact of factors, which are difficult to measure, are often underestimated. Further, as Gould maintains in his essay "Curveball," there is evidence that Herrnstein's and Murray's measure of intelligence is not immutable: ". . . the well-documented fifteen point average difference in IQ between blacks and whites in America, with substantial heritability of IQ in family lines within each group, permits no automatic conclusion that truly equal opportunity might not raise the black average enough to equal or surpass the white mean" (*Reader*, 333). In other words, Gould maintains that "we must fight the doctrine of *The Bell Curve* both because it is wrong and because it will, if activated, cut off all possibility of proper nurturance for everyone's intelligence." Further, it has been documented that the scores which Herrnstein and Murray used to provide evidence for the immutability of their measure of intelligence reflect the schooling individuals had completed and were not, as Lee Brown maintains in his essay "IQ, Nurture, and the Realization of Excellence," "determined by the features that are measured by IQ tests."

LEE BROWN, "IQ, NURTURE, AND THE REALIZATION OF EXCELLENCE."

Lee Brown, an assistant professor of philosophy at Howard University, provides a good assessment of *The Bell Curve* and Gould's "Curveball" and promotes the position that nurturing and "burning-the-midnight-oil" are the keys to any measure of success. One will note that in "Curveball" Gould disarms and calls into question the thesis of genetic differences in intelligence between whites and blacks, as well as the statistics which Herrnstein and Murray employ to buttress it. Further, Gould reveals the real agenda of the book, namely to justify what Herrnstein and Murray call a custodial state—one akin to the Indian reservation "for some substantial minority of the nation's population, while the rest of America tries to go about its business." *The Bell Curve* is a warning salvo for the African-American community. It and similar documents are important components of the scenario which Toni Morrison painted in her Charter Day Address (s. *Reader*, 161f.).

STEPHEN JAY GOULD, "AMERICAN POLYGENY AND CRANIOMETRY BEFORE DARWIN: BLACKS AND INDIANS AS SEPARATE, INFERIOR SPECIES."

Gould's second essay, "American Polygeny and Craniometry before Darwin: Blacks and Indians as Separate, Inferior Species," provides a history of racial prejudice, reaching back, as far as America is concerned, into the 18th and 19th centuries for evidence and revealing the racial attitudes of men like Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and Abraham Lincoln. Further, Gould exposes the "scientific

evidence" and the purveyors of such evidence, used by generations of Europeans and white Americans to rank the African's mental ability below that of the white man, as well as to enslave and to discriminate against him. In that regard, Gould poses two questions: "[D]id the introduction of inductive science add legitimate data to change or strengthen a nascent argument for racial ranking? Or did *a priori* commitment to ranking fashion the 'scientific' questions asked and even the data gathered to support a foreordained conclusion?"

Further, what were the positions of Alexander von Humboldt and the "polygenists" relative to the "equality of man"? Who was Louis Agassiz and what was, according to him, the relationship of polygeny to scripture? How was the theory of polygeny used to support arguments in favor of the enslavement of the African? What was the dilemma in which the polygenists found themselves?

CLAUDE M STEELE, "BLACK STUDENTS LIVE DOWN TO EXPECTATIONS."

SHELBY STEELE, "AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: THE PRICE OF PREFERENCE."

ETHAN WATTERS, "CLAUDE STEELE HAS SCORES TO SETTLE."

With their essays "Black Students Live Down to Expectations" and "Affirmative Action: The Price of Preference," the twin brothers Claude M. Steele and Shelby Steele waded into the debate about the academic performance of African Americans and affirmative action. And Ethan Watters tries in his essay "Claude Steele Has Scores to Settle" to bring clarity to the brothers' divergent views. Claude M. Steele is professor of social psychology in the Department of Psychology at Stanford University. He received his Ph.D. degree in 1971 from Ohio State University and has conducted and continues to conduct research on self-esteem and self-evaluative functioning and its role in shaping interests, motivation, and identity. Additionally, his research has explored the reactions of African-American students to being negatively stereotyped and its effect on shaping intellectual identity and performance. His brother Shelby Steele received the Ph.D. degree in English from the University of Utah and is presently professor of English at San Jose State University in California. His book *The Content of Our Character*, from which the above-referenced essay was taken, won the National Book Critics Circle Award for general non-fiction.

What is it then that has caused the brothers to be on opposite ends of the spectrum of what many call the poor academic performance of African Americans? Watters points out in his essay that "Shelby's idea of racial vulnerability and Claude's stereotype vulnerability vary little." What is then Shelby Steele's definition of "racial vulnerability"? How does it differ from Claude Steele's definition of "stereotype vulnerability"?

The brothers' ideas diverge over the "questions of who is responsible for the predicament and what is to be done about it." Shelby Steele continues to maintain that the last two generations of African Americans

have not taken advantage of opportunities acquired in the 1960s as a result of the civil rights movement. Further, in an article entitled "How to Grow Extremists" published in *The New York Times* on Sunday, March 13, 1994, S. Steele expresses vehemently, as he has done in recent forums, his opposition to entitlements by race, sex, ethnicity, and sexual orientation—"categories that in no way reflect merit" and maintains that these entitlements "are at the root of the great social evils in American life." In *The Content of Our Character*, Steele says that "[p]ersonal responsibility is the brick and mortar of power" and that African Americans must avoid all exploitations of their victimization, developing, while eschewing group identity, a keen sense of self and personal responsibility.

Claude M. Steele's research offers a kind of "deep sight and rescue mission." In an essay entitled "Race and the Schooling of Black Americans," which was published in *The Atlantic Monthly* in April 1992, C. Steele presents a number of case studies which he and his colleagues offer as evidence for the reasons why African-American students' academic performance is sometimes below national levels. He rejects Dinesh D'Souza's argument that affirmative action programs in predominantly white institutions of higher learning, which, many believe, are responsible for recruiting African-American students inadequately prepared for college work, cause failure and the high attrition rate among them. His research has documented that African-American students who have been adequately prepared flunk out in larger numbers. Why?

Could the answer be the negative national "impression" of African Americans which permeates every level of American life—a devaluation of their potential before they approach the proverbial starting line? Could the cause be, to use Ralph Ellison, the state of "invisibility" projected through their academic preparation in which, despite their defining contributions to America (s. Ralph Ellison's "What America Would Be Like Without Blacks," [Reader, 225]), African Americans have been forced to live? Are not they more entitled than "new" immigrants to "participate in the defining images of the society"?

C. Steele maintains that "their exclusion from these images denies their contributive history and presence in society. Thus, whereas immigrants can tilt toward assimilation in pursuit of the opportunities for which they came, American blacks may find it harder to assimilate. For them, the offer of acceptance in return for assimilation carries a primal insult: It asks them to join in something that has made them invisible" ("Race and the Schooling of Black Americans"). However, despite their "invisibility," imposed upon them by the larger society and even used by new immigrants to define themselves as "Americans" (s. Toni Morrison's "On the Backs of Blacks," [Reader, 240]), African Americans' influence on American life, be it speech, their creative use of language, their quest for freedom in a land created to preserve the "inalienable rights," their musical expressions, among which is "jazz," and their literary expressions which, Eleanor W. Traylor maintains, are the beginnings of modernity, has been a major tributary to the American mainstream. However, their influence has been largely ignored in places where it most counts—the

schools—where African Americans, by virtue of their race, are considered intellectually inferior. And this, according to C. Steele, creates among many young African Americans a condition which he calls “racial vulnerability.” Further, he maintains that “black achievement is consistently linked to conditions of schooling that reduce racial vulnerability.”

Is this then how “visibility” is created?

In his *Atlantic Monthly* essay, as well as in his article “**Blacks Students Live Down to Expectations,**” C. Steele proffers, while not rejecting affirmative action programs, a “rescue mission” to solve this conundrum which I shall excerpt and/or summarize here: (1) teachers must learn to value the students who bear race and class vulnerabilities and their potentials as human beings; (2) “[t]he challenge and the promise of personal fulfillment, not remediation (under whatever guise), should guide the education of these students”; (3) racial segregation must be avoided because it “draws out group differences and makes people feel more vulnerable when they inevitably cross group lines to compete in the larger society”; and (4) the contributions of African Americans must be made evident and clear in the “mainstream” curriculum of American education—not merely consigned to Black History Month.

At this point, one must decide, having read the selections by Claude M. Steele and Shelby Steele, which of them has “deep sight” and whose “rescue mission” will provide a successful solution to the highly debated topic of academic achievement of African Americans and an appropriate response to the calls for the dismemberment of entitlement programs.

ELEANOR TRAYLOR, “THE HUMANITIES AND AFRO-AMERICAN LITERARY TRADITION.”

HENRY LOUIS GATES JR., “RACE AND THE HUMANITIES: THE TRANSFORMING OF THE AMERICAN MIND.”

One will explore in this chapter how **Professors Eleanor W. Traylor and Henry Louis Gates Jr.**, respond to the national summons inscribed in the reports *To Reclaim a Legacy ; American Memory: A Report on the Humanities in the Nation's Public Schools* ; and *Report to the President, the Congress and American People: Humanities in America* (1988), the first written by William Bennett and the latter two by Lynne V. Cheney. Both Bennett and Cheney are former chairmen of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Both Traylor and Gates are scholars in the area of African-American literature and criticism. Traylor is professor of English and chairman of the Department of English at Howard University. Nationally and internationally recognized as a scholar of extraordinary vision, Traylor received the B.A. degree from Spelman College, the M.A. from Atlanta University, and the Ph.D. from The Catholic University of America and is the author of scholarly publications on Larry Neal, Henry Dumas, Toni Cade

Bambara, Margaret Walker, James Baldwin, Toni Morrison, and Richard Wright. Into her essay, Traylor weaves the remembered texts of the African-American past and present to impart a lesson for the future, namely to abandon cultural geneticism and enjoin a world in which the voices of “we church”—“the community of memory”—are heard.

(One is strongly encouraged to examine “we church,” enriched by John Lovell Jr., in his essay “Afro-American Spiritual: Radical Change in the Existing Order of Things.” Lovell was Professor of English at Howard University and served also as an associate dean in the College of Liberal Arts. His book Black Song: The Forge and the Flame, from which the essay is taken, is a literary tribute to the power and beauty of the timeless musical tradition of Negro spirituals, “strongly African, strongly American, and a curious and magnificent mixture of the two.”)

Both Traylor and Gates speak to the question of the relationship of the African American to what is called Western Civilization; in their quest for an answer, both summon James Baldwin and his essay “Stranger in the Village.” Both chide the West’s arrogant exclusion of things which it does not “know”: “What I know not, is not knowledge.” Recognizing our banishment from the hallowed halls of the West, Traylor summons us to find our place in memory, for in memory is the history of our people. Where do we find that memory? By examining the literary texts of our “griots” -- our authors, Traylor summons up the traditions of the African-American legacy in literature as “a rigorous examination of [African-American] texts of the past in the present; the inclusion of two histories in dialectical conversation; one’s own history and that of an other; . . . the creation of a community of memory where we hear our own voices, in multiplicity, articulate what we need and what we feel to be the best in human life.” There is, however, a marked difference in the conclusions of Traylor and Gates. While Traylor focuses on the traditions of African-American legacy in literature, Gates seems to promote an abandonment of the “dialectical conversation” between “one’s own history and that of an other”—a dialectical conversation in which, through a rigorous examination of African-American texts, the West (“that of an other”) and its true intentions might be revealed. It is that something, according to Traylor, that the West leaves untouched, unspoken, unacknowledged: “And, once again, the “we churches” in the villages, speaking through the silences of the great cathedral, are the heretics hurled down the slippery bottomless well to be found in the crypt.”

Henry Louis Gates Jr., speaks of transforming the American mind by recommending that the nation, through its institutions of higher education, reject cultural geneticism, the rhetoric of possession and lineage, by, in the words of Toni Cade Bambara, scuttling the basic dualism “that permeates social, educational, political, economic, cultural, and intimate life in this country” (*Reader*, 232). In its place, Gates would like to substitute multicultural programs, “to account for the comparable eloquence of the African, the Asian, the Latin American, and the Middle Eastern traditions, to prepare our students for their

roles in the twenty-first century as citizens of a world culture, educated through a truly human notion of the humanities." The W. E. B. Du Bois Professor of the Humanities, chairman of Afro-American Studies, Director of the W. E. B. Du Bois Institute for Afro-American Studies at Harvard University, as well as a MacArthur Foundation "genius-grant" recipient, Gates is one of the most important voices in the arena of African-American culture. Having graduated *summa cum laude* from Yale University in 1973 with a B. A. degree in English language and literature, Gates pursued graduate studies in English literature at Claire College at the University of Cambridge from which he received the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees.

RALPH J. BUNCHE, "THE PROGRAMS OF ORGANIZATIONS DEVOTED TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE STATUS OF THE AMERICAN NEGRO."

Also in this Chapter is **Ralph J. Bunche's** 1939 assessment of the American Negro's progress in defining his place in America and what he maintains are the causes for his having not been "delivered." Bunche was born on August 7, 1904, in Detroit, Michigan and died on December 9, 1971, in New York City. Having graduated at the head of his class from the University of California at Los Angeles, Bunche pursued doctoral studies at Harvard University, becoming the first African American to have received the doctorate in political science from that institution. While a professor at Howard University, an institution at which he taught from 1928 until 1938, he organized the Department of Political Science -- a department which he also chaired. An expert on European colonialism in Africa, Bunche worked on the future of colonial territories at the United States Department of State from 1944 until 1947. From 1947 until his death, he dedicated his professional life to the United Nations (UN). He is credited with having authored two chapters of the UN Charter which address trusteeship and non-self-governing territories. As the UN mediator on Palestine (1948-1949), he brokered successfully an armistice between the State of Israel and the Arab nations and was awarded for his efforts the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1950, becoming the first person of color to have received this prestigious award.

In his essay, **"The Programs of Organizations Devoted to the Improvement of the Status of the American Negro,"** Bunche addresses the reality of the tangible world in which the African American found (finds) himself and delivers a scathing attack on what he maintains is the myopia of African-American institutions which have sustained him, albeit, again according to Bunche, not always successfully. He presents topics (the role of the African-American church, fraternal orders, social/political organizations) and arguments which are as timely today as they were in 1939. He saves special acerbity for the African-American organizations and their leaders for not having woven/aligned blacks concerns into/with national and global discussions. In addition to his admonitions to the black community to avoid using race as its point of attack to secure its place at the proverbial table and from his unique vantage point, Bunche maintains that the African American is sorely in need of leadership which will bring him into

the modern world. In that regard, he outlines in his 13-point program (*Reader*, 396) what that leadership would have to do in order to achieve that lofty goal. Du Bois responds to Bunche's 13-point program in his essay **"The Position of the Negro in the American Social Order: Where Do We Go from Here?"** (*Reader*, 6f.).

Having examined Bunche's 13-point program and Du Bois' response, do you believe that there is validity in the former's recommendations? Or, do you believe, as does Du Bois, that such attempts would be in vain? Why? Further, is what is happening environmentally to the inner-city communities, which are predominantly African-American, the result of our not having developed "organization and leadership endowed with broad social perspective and fore-sighted, analytical intelligence"? Or, is it race—white racism? Or, is it both? What would Bunche have said about Robert D. Bullard's essay "Anatomy of Environmental Racism and the Environmental Justice Movement" in which American institutional racism is blamed for having "shaped the economic, political, and ecological landscape, and buttressed the exploitation of both land and people"—for having allowed minority communities to become and remain "internal colonies"? How would Bunche have responded to the five principle colonizing processes? What happens to Bunche's "weaving process" in the face of Bullard's contention that, in terms of zoning boards and community-planning commissions, "[p]eople of color have been systematically excluded from [the] decisionmaking boards, commissions, and governmental agencies (or allowed only token representation)"?

While **Robert D. Bullard** gives credit to community—grassroots—organizations for placing equity and social justice onto the larger environmental agenda, he cautions that these organizations must apply yet more pressure to achieve a truly global movement "for a just, sustainable, and healthy society and effectively resolve pressing environmental disputes."

RONALD WALTERS, "BLACK POLITICS AND DEMOCRATIC THEORY: 'TWO UNRECONCILED STRIVINGS.'"

Perhaps in answer to the Bunche challenge of 1939, inscribed in his 13-point program, **Ronald Walters** proffers in his 1997 essay **"Black Politics and Democratic Theory: 'Two Unreconciled Strivings'"** a succinct history of efforts of African-American leaders and organizations to bring the African American into the so-called mainstream of politics and economics.

What then are, according to Du Bois, the "two unreconciled strivings" (s. footnote 20 in Walter's essay and, of course, its most important source, The Souls of Black Folk)?

Walters rightly suggests that the strivings cannot be reconciled unless and until the dominant community is committed to a truly democratic society. Having found the way to the door of opportunity and economic freedom, the African American must have the key to open it. In years past and, perhaps now, the right key is to be a member of the "right" race.



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INTRODUCTION

The subjects of the reading selections in this chapter are Africa, Egyptology, and Afrocentricity. The essayists are all members of the faculty of Howard University.

ROBERT J. CUMMINGS, "AFRICA BETWEEN THE AGES."

JOSEPH E. HARRIS, "RETURN MOVEMENTS TO WEST AND EAST AFRICA: A COMPARATIVE APPROACH."

Robert J. Cummings, the first of the four essayists whose work comprises Chapter Eight, is professor of African Studies and chairman of the Department of African Studies at Howard University. Having received the B. S. degree in European history from Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University and the M.A. degree in American history from North Carolina Central State University, Cummings began to pursue doctoral studies in African history at the University of California in Los Angeles, from which he received the Ph.D. degree in African economic history. A scholar of renown, a recipient of many awards and grants and a consultant as well as a research fellow for the United States House of Representative, Cummings served, during the period 1984-1986, as Vice President and, eventually, as President of the African Studies Association, becoming the first African- American scholar to serve in that capacity in the organization's history. During the spring semester of 1998, Cummings was the Howard University Republic of South Africa Scholar-in-Residence.

Joseph E. Harris, the fourth essayist, is an *alumnus* of Howard University, having received from that institution both the Bachelor and Master of Arts degrees. He pursued graduate studies in African history at Northwestern University from which he received the Ph.D. degree. Having served as chairman of the Department of History at Howard University from 1975 until 1981, Harris was elevated in 1992 by the Board of Trustees at Howard to Distinguished Professor of History. The author of eight books and many scholarly articles and a recipient of many honors and awards, Harris is presently a member of the executive committee of the International Scientific Committee for the Slave Route Project to Promote Intercultural Cooperation—a project sponsored by UNESCO. As a member of that committee, Harris coordinates the Northern American region of the Slave Route Project, a research project on global African Diaspora.

Both Cummings and Harris add new perspectives to our understanding of the history of Africa and the Africans in the Diaspora. In addition to offering a splendid bibliography for students who are interested in pursuing a study of African history, Cummings' essay, "**Africa Between the Ages**," positions Africa, as he maintains, between the ancient/medieval and the modern/contemporary ages, exploring the research on ancient Egypt and the continent's attempts to define and develop itself within its own ecosystem. These attempts have been made difficult, given what Cummings says were "alien influences" and "questions of subsistence." Further, he explores the impact of the Age of Exploration on European and African history; Africa's encounter with Islam; "Africa's American connection," as well as the consequences of these

"encounters" in terms of identity sought by continental Africans and Africans in the Diaspora. According to Cummings, the contemporary period, which encompasses the Berlin Conference, the partitioning of Africa, colonialism, and the need for economic development offered and offers still more challenges for Africa in its search for identity.

*How did, according to Cummings, the division between Africa north and south of the Sahara occur and what impact did it have on Africa south of the Sahara? Who introduced the Dromedary camel to the continent and what impact did it have on Africa? How was the Age of Exploration significant for European and African history? Summarize Africa's encounter with Islam. Summarize Africa's encounter with Europe. What were the four consequences of the Age of Discovery for Africa? What are the salient points, outlined by Cummings, in the debate on Africa's use of European languages? Summarize Africa's encounter with America. What are, according to Cummings, the five "processes which were destined to affect the identity and place of Africa in our age"? Distinguish the differences among British, French, and Portuguese colonial rule. What were the effects of the westernization of Africa's elite? What effect does the present economic status of many African nations have on their attempts to define themselves and determine their destinies? (For yet another view of contemporary Africa, one is referred to a very readable article entitled "Continental Shift" by Philip Gourevitch, published in *The New Yorker*, August 7, 1997. In it Gourevitch posits the view that Laurent Kabila's rise to power in the Congo perhaps signals that Africa's leaders, especially those in central Africa, are uniting to rid themselves of "old political evils" and to seize finally control of the destinies of their countries.)*

One of the most interesting topics in our discussion of Africa is the role played by the so-called "returnees" and "recaptives," i.e., those Africans enslaved in the Americas who returned to Africa, specifically to Liberia and Sierre Leone. Cummings suggests that the "returnees," whose "Weltanschauung" had been shaped by their encounters with the West, had to readjust to African societies. In his essay, **"Return Movements to West and East Africa: A Comparative Approach,"** Joseph Harris explores the efforts to repatriate enslaved Africans not only from the West, i.e., the Americas and England, but also those from India, known as the "Bombay group," to Sierre Leone, Liberia, and Freretown, as well as the consequences of their repatriation to those societies.

What was instrumental in the founding of Liberia? What occurred in 1787 in both England and the United States? Who was Paul Cuffe? Why was Haiti referred to as the "Black Menace"? What was unique about Liberia? Who were Joseph Roberts, John Russwurm, John Day, and Edward Blyden? How then did what they "learned" in the West affect the African societies to which they returned? What was the greatest contribution of Africans abroad? From what part of Africa is it said that the "Bombay group" comes?

ANN MACY ROTH, "EGYPT, AFRICAN AMERICANS, AND AFROCENTRISM: AN EGYPTOLOGIST'S VIEW."

RUSSELL ADAMS, "EPISTEMOLOGY, AFROCENTRICITY, AND IDEOLOGY."

Ann Macy Roth and **Russell Adams** provide essays which speak to the topic of Afrocentricity. Ann Macy Roth is presently an associate professor in the Department of Classics at Howard. Having completed her undergraduate studies in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago, Roth remained there to pursue graduate studies, receiving in 1985 the Ph.D. The presenter of more than thirty scholarly papers at professional meetings, the author of three books, among which is *Egyptian Phyles in the Old Kingdom: The Evolution of a System of Social Organization*, and more than a dozen articles on ancient Egypt and Hieroglyphs, Roth has had vast field experience, involving, for example, the Giza Mastabas Project; the Giza Plateau Mapping Project; Watetkhethor Copying Project; and the Medieval Luxor Project.

Roth's essay, "Egypt, African Americans, and Afrocentrism: An Egyptologist's View," attempts to disabuse us scientifically of our romanticization of Egypt and of many of our preconceived notions about ancient Egypt—ones which have been promoted by individuals who have not had training in Egyptian language, art, and archaeology. Further, Roth invites careful research into the role which Egypt played in the ancient world and into the influence which it had on other parts of Africa.

When did Egyptology begin? How were the ancient Egyptians reviewed by early practitioners? What was instrumental in Egyptologists' investigation into the ties and similarities to other African cultures? How has that task been made difficult? When and under what circumstances did more intensive scientific examinations of these similarities occur? What has been discovered about Nubian culture?

Russell Adams' essay, "Epistemology, Afrocentricity, and Ideology," explores the impact which Afrocentricity has had on the scholarly community and popular dialogue, as well as provides a succinct history of the literature which is necessary for an understanding of the future of Afrocentrism. Adams is presently professor of Afro-American studies and chairman of the Department of Afro-American Studies at Howard University. The recipient of the B.A. degree from Morehouse College, and the M.A. and the Ph.D. degrees from the University of Chicago. The author of *Great Negroes Past and Present*, Adams has been a primary advisor/contributor to the three-volume *Time-Life* series entitled *African Americans: Voices of Triumph* and the 1995 and 1996 editions of Grolier's *The New Book of Knowledge*.

In response to what Adams cites as "the negative aspects and consequences of traditional curricula and attitudes towards people of color," several types of Afrocentrism emerged. And it is Afrocentrism which, according to Adams, has provided the arena in which the role of these different perspectives play in

determining the instruction and research in the field of Afro-American studies.

What are the two broad categories into which black ideologies have been divided? Of which ideologies are Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois, and Martin Luther King Jr., representatives? What is the position of the psychological black nationalist? What are the limitations of these ideologues? Of what importance are Du Bois' Black Reconstruction and The Philadelphia Negro ? What is the hypothesis of the pathological theory of the black community? What was the argument of the deprivation theories? What is Maulana Karenga's definition of "adaptive vitality"?



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BENJAMIN BRAWLEY, "THE NEGRO GENIUS."

In his sweeping essay, "Epistemology, Afrocentricity, and Ideology," Russell Adams remarks that, during the period 1915-1935, "[t]he practical intention of contributionism was the bolstering of community pride and confidence in an era of official racism." It was during this period that **Benjamin Brawley** published the book, *The Negro in Literature and Art*, which he expanded and released in 1937 under the title *The Negro Genius: A New Appraisal of the Achievement of the American Negro in Literature and the Fine Arts*. It is from this expanded version that the reading selection "**The Negro Genius**" has been taken. Brawley was a professor of English at Howard University, and, according to literary critic Stephen Henderson, was one of those middle-class black literary scholars who, prior to 1935, criticized writers like Langston Hughes—writers who inveighed in their writing "against the smugness and the self-consciousness of the bourgeoisie"; praised "the so-called common element," the "lowdown folks," who "live on Seventh Street in Washington or State Street in Chicago"; and presented "again and again the roustabout, the gambler, and the prostitute." Brawley's essay is an important historic piece, for it is a sign of the time, namely an attempt by many black scholars to hold up as examples works by artists who portrayed what black middle-class people felt were "positive" and inoffensive black life images. They also felt that such portrayals would be responses to the negative stereotypes which were often found in the works by white authors of the time.

STERLING ALLEN BROWN, "NEGRO CHARACTER AS SEEN BY WHITE AUTHORS."

Such stereotypical portrayals by white authors are laid bare in **Sterling A. Brown's** essay, "**Negro Character As Seen by White Authors**" which was written in 1933. A native of Washington, D. C., Brown, who was born in 1901, was no stranger to Howard University. His father was a professor of religion at Howard and encouraged young Brown to follow in his footsteps. Brown's mother introduced him to the poetry of Robert Burns and Paul Laurence Dunbar and encouraged him to write. Having graduated from Dunbar High School in Washington, D. C., Brown attended Williams College from which he graduated in 1922 as a member of the prestigious national honor society Phi Beta Kappa. He immediately pursued graduate studies English at Harvard University and was awarded in 1923 the M. A. degree. From 1923 until 1926 Brown taught at Virginia Seminary in Lynchburg, Virginia; from 1926 until 1928 at Lincoln University in Missouri; and from 1928 until 1929 at Fisk University. In 1929 Brown began his longest tenure as a teacher of English and literature at Howard University from which he retired in 1969. Often credited with having introduced the first course in African-American literature to the academy, Brown, although he taught the course for many years, must pass that honor to Charles Eaton Burch, professor of English at Howard, an internationally recognized scholar and authority on Daniel Defoe.

A nationally recognized poet and literary critic, Brown published, among other things, *Outline for the Study of the Poetry of American Negroes* (1931); *The Negro in American Poetry and Drama* (1937); *The Negro in American Fiction* (1937); and *Southern Road* (1932). An anthology of Brown's poems, *The Collected Poems of Sterling A. Brown*, was published and edited by Michael S. Harper in 1980. Perhaps one of the most acclaimed resources for students of African-American literature, history, and culture is *The Negro Caravan* which Brown, together with Arthur Paul Davis and Ulysses Lee, published in 1941.

Although Brown navigates the reader through the ugly portrayals of African Americans by white American writers, he acknowledges in the section, 'Attempts At Realization,' there have been some white writers, notably Eugene O'Neill, Julia Peterkin, and Du Bose Heyward, who, in their works, had rejected the negative stereotypes of African Americans and rendered positive portrayals of them. However, Brown notes that the authentic exploration of African-American life, a self-definition "must come from Negro authors themselves."

STEPHEN HENDERSON, "THEME."

It is this theme of self-definition which **Stephen Henderson** explores in his essay, "Theme"—a chapter taken from his seminal text, *Understanding the New Black Poetry* (1972). (See E. Ethelbert Miller's "Stephen E. Henderson: A Conversation with a Literary Critic" in Chapter Six and the Study Guide for Chapter Six for further information about Henderson.) In "Theme" Henderson reveals the black poets' journey to authentic self-expression—the poets' journey, undertaken chiefly to prove that they could write—to a place where they used their talents in the service of the emancipation of the African American from slavery—to the Harlem Renaissance and its declaration to portray authentic Negro life—to what Henderson maintains is the place where the black poets can "speak directly to Black people *about themselves* in order to move them toward self-knowledge and collective freedom" -- to an art which, according to the late poet Larry Neal, "opens us up to the beauty and ugliness within us; that makes us understand our condition and each other in a more profound manner; that unites us, exposing us to our painful weaknesses and strengths; and finally, an art that posits for us the Vision of a Liberated Future" ("Any Day Now: Black Art and Black Liberation," *Ebony*, August 1969, and cited by Henderson).

What does Henderson call the "great overarching moment of consciousness for Black people"? How is this "great overarching moment" realized in the works of African-American poets? What was, according to Henderson, the importance of the prisoners' rebellion at Attica? By whom was it influenced?

What are, according to Sterling Brown, the five chief areas of interest which are indispensable points of departure for black poetry? How do the poems reprinted in the Reader comport with Brown's chief areas of interest? How have, according to Henderson, the concerns inscribed in Locke's "The New Negro" become "chiefly political"?

ALAIN LOCKE, "THE NEGRO'S CONTRIBUTION TO AMERICAN CULTURE."

Also in this chapter is **Alain LeRoy Locke's** essay entitled **"The Negro's Contribution to American Culture"** published in 1939. Here Locke addresses himself to the questions of cultural politics, cultural racialism, and cultural chauvinism as they relate to the art and literature of the African American. Specifically, he gives himself two tasks: one of "renovating" the subject of the cultural contributions of the African American and two, perhaps more important, of assessing the history of the critical evaluation of those contributions. In that regard, Locke poses three questions: "What makes a work of art Negro, its theme or its idiom?"; "What constitutes a 'Negro contribution to culture,' its authorship or its cultural base? "; and "Is there or should there be any such set of categories in our critical thinking or our creative living?" Locke begins with James Weldon Johnson's anthology entitled *The Book of American Negro Poetry* for a possible answer to the first of the three questions; however, he departs from Johnson to engage the debate which the answers to the following questions will reveal:

What answer, according to Locke, does Johnson provide? How does culture politics, according to Locke, force both majority and minority partisans into "strange and untenable positions"? Do you agree that there are "no group differentials of language or basic culture patterns" between the African American and the majority culture? Why? What are, according to Locke, the dangers associated with cultural chauvinism as it relates to the African American and the majority's fallacy of regarding the cultural situation of the African American "after the analogy of a 'nation within a nation'"? Contrast Locke's position on the notion of a "nation within a nation" to that of Stephen Henderson and Larry Neal. What are, according to Locke, the results of cultural racialism and chauvinism as they relate to the African American? What are the results of "cultural biracialism"? Explore Locke's belief regarding the "Negro cultural product" and how does he define it? What are the parallels which Locke draws between what is defined as Negro culture and that which is defined as American? What is, according to Locke, the impact of the African-American ingredient in the mix which is often called American culture? What example does Locke use to make his case? Can Locke discern any basic African common denominators and any explanation of the vitality and versatility of "Negro culture contacts"? Define the two periods into which the cultural history of the African American can be divided? Define what Locke means by cultural conformity. By whom specifically and what has cultural conformity been reversed? What is the "New Negro Movement"? How does Locke assess this "New Negro Movement"? What was the keystone of this "New Negro Movement" and who were some of its movers and shakers? What were the three schools of "Negro cultural expression" which appeared between 1925 and 1939? To whom might Locke be referring when he noted that some members of the first school displayed "irresponsible individualism and eccentric exhibitionism"? Who were some of the members of the third school? Essentially, what is Locke's position on the path of "Negro art"? What, according to Locke, saves the artistic expression of the African American from being "a feebly echoed repetition of general situations and attitudes"? What advantages

do white and black artists have vis-à-vis the "Negro material"? What criticism does Locke preserve for Hollywood's portrayal of Negro life? What is, according to Locke, "the next crusade in the ascending path of Negro art"? (One must not forget that this essay was written in 1939.) Has the "next crusade" be realized?

RALPH ELLISON, "EPILOGUE " FROM *INVISIBLE MAN*.

The use of Negro art as "an instrument for social enlightenment and constructive social reform"!

*Could one say that Ralph Ellison's novel **Invisible Man** is an instrument for social enlightenment and constructive social reform?*

Invisible Man was written in the socially turbulent 1940s and published in 1952. While it depicts the African-American experience within the American context, it holds the proverbial mirror up to white Americans. The question of racism and personal identity permeates the novel; however, the novel proffers the universal theme evident in the great literature of the time, namely that of man's relationship to the modern world which does not "see" him. Ellison selected the American context for his excursion into the invisibility of the African American.

Born and raised in the South, Ellison's "hero/narrator" remains nameless. A brilliant student at a black college, the "Invisible Man" subscribes to the doctrine of hard work and humility—a doctrine promoted by the school and the larger Southern society.

Does this doctrine remind you of one preached by one of the Reader`s essayists?

The "Invisible Man's" innocent idealism moves him to reveal something to the white supporter of the college, Mr. Norton, which, according to Dr. Bledsoe, the president of the college, he should not have. As a result of that mistake, the "Invisible Man" is "forced" to leave the college. Having rejected the hypocrisy of the college's philosophy, the "Invisible Man" travels to New York. Moving through some of the important defining moments of the African-American life, from slavery to accommodationism to migration to the north, the novel concludes with the "Epilogue." In a world in which his ideals are shattered by hypocrisy and in which he could easily have given in to cynicism and hatred, the "Invisible Man" chooses a philosophy of hope: ". . . my world has become one of infinite possibilities. What a phrase—still it's a good phrase and a good view of life, and a man shouldn't accept any other" Confronted by society's demand for conformity, the "Invisible Man" finds the "self": "Whence all this passion toward conformity anyway? -- diversity is the word. Let man keep his many parts and you'll have no tyrant states. Why, if they follow this conformity business they'll end up by forcing me, an invisible man, to become white, which is not a color but the lack of one. Must I strive toward colorlessness? But seriously, and without snobbery, think of what the world would lose if that should happen. "

Is not the value of diversity and that of conformity being debated today? If, as Ellison believed, art should serve democracy, frame a discussion how his novel Invisible Man deals with the problems and challenges of American democracy, using his essay, "What America Would Be Like Without Blacks," found in Chapter Four. Ellison concludes the "Epilogue" by stating: "Who knows but that, on the lower frequencies, I speak for you?" What, do you think, he means?

Although overshadowed by Richard Wright, Ellison never failed to acknowledge Wright's role in launching his literary career. In 1937 Langston Hughes arranged a meeting between the two men, and a friendship ensued. As a matter of fact, both men were participants in the Federal Writers' Project, and it was Ellison who in 1939 was Wright's best man at his marriage to ballet dancer Dhima Rose Meadman, the first of four wives.

JOHN REILLY, "NOTES ON NATIVE SON."

John Reilly, professor of English at Howard University, the author of countless scholarly publications on African-American literature, and arguably one of the nation's foremost authorities on the works of **Richard Wright**, provides "**Notes on Native Son**" which precedes a section from the novel entitled "Flight."

RICHARD WRIGHT, "FLIGHT" FROM NATIVE SON.

Wright was born on September 4, 1908, near Natchez, Mississippi. Having led a rather peripatetic early life, beset sometimes by tragic circumstances, Wright moved in 1927 to Chicago; joined the Communist Party in 1933; and was hired to supervise a youth club which was organized to combat juvenile delinquency among African Americans on the South Side of Chicago. It was also in Chicago that he was hired by the Federal Writers' Project. In 1937 Wright moved to New York City where he worked as a columnist for the *Daily Worker* and continued to work in the Federal Writers' Project. Having had some measure of success with the collection of short stories entitled *Uncle Tom's Children*, Wright published *Native Son* in 1940 which became immediately a best-seller. (See James Baldwin's essay entitled "Note of a Native Son" [1955].) In 1944 Wright made public his break with the Communist Party in an essay "I Tried to be a Communist" which was published in *The Atlantic Monthly*. Wright's novel *Black Boy* was published in March 1945 and, having received excellent reviews, became a Book-of-the-Month Club selection. Riding the crest of success, Wright was invited to travel to France in 1946 by the French government. After an 8-month stay in Paris, Wright returned to New York City to remain, as a result of overt racism, only briefly. He, his second wife, Ellen, and their daughter returned to Paris and became permanent expatriates. His third novel, *The Outsider*, published in 1953, his fourth, *Savage Holiday*,

published in 1954, and his fifth, *The Long Dream*, published in 1958, never achieved the success of his early works. Wright died of a heart attack on November 28, 1960, and is buried in Paris. A collection of short stories entitled *Eight Men* was published posthumously in 1961.

RUDOLPH FISHER, "THE CAUCASIAN STORMS HARLEM."

One of the most charismatic writers of the so-called Harlem Renaissance was **Rudolph Fisher** on whom **Calvin H. Sinnette** provides a biographical sketch "**Rudolph Fisher: Harlem Renaissance Physician-Writer**" in Chapter Six. Not considered to possess the creative depth of, for example, Charles Chesnutt, Fisher is, however, recognized for having brought greater realism to the literary landscape. Here in Chapter Nine is provided Fisher's account of what he found in Harlem, having spent five years studying medicine at Howard University. The theme of his essay, "**The Caucasian Storms Harlem**," is clear, but it is the critical assessment of white America's fascination with things black which is compelling. Compelling is the question at the end of the essay: "Is it [whites' active and participatory interest in things Negro] significant of basic human responses, the effect of which, once admitted, will extend far beyond cabarets?"

Has it extended itself beyond cabarets?

TONI MORRISON, EXCERPT FROM *SONG OF SOLOMON*.

Almost immediately following the publication of her Pulitzer-Prize-winning novel *Song of Solomon* (1977), **Toni Morrison** came to Howard to read from her works. Textually rich, *Song of Solomon* provides the "coming-of-age/self" of the protagonist, Milkman. Morrison stated that she wanted to push Milkman to his limits, to the realization that one does not own "it" unless one is willing to give "it" up, and that one must surrender, as did Sula and now Milkman, to the free fall. And when one comes to that moment of resolve, one will be able to "ride it."

HENRY DUMAS, "GOODBYE, SWEETWATER."

It is this resolve, namely to take ownership of one's life, to cast away the fears of falling and failing that buried themselves into the flesh and mind of Layton Bridges of "**Goodbye, Sweetwater**" by **Henry Dumas**. This short story is taken from a collection of his short stories entitled *Goodbye, Sweetwater* which were edited by poet Eugene Redmond and published posthumously in 1988. In a letter to the "community" dated September 17, 1974, and reprinted in a special issue of *Black American Literature*

Forum (Summer 1988), Toni Morrison writes:

In 1968, a young Black man, Henry Dumas, went through a turnstile at a New York City subway station. A transit cop shot him in the chest and killed him. Circumstances surrounding his death remain unclear. Before that happened, however, he had written some of the most beautiful, moving, and profound poetry and fiction that I have ever in my life read.

That was the end of Dumas' physical life; however, the literary legacy which he left has moved and continues to move us. Dumas was born on July 20, 1934, in Sweet Home, Arkansas, and moved to New York City when he was ten years old. Having completed his secondary school education, Dumas attended City College briefly before enlisting in the United States Air Force. After his stint in military, Dumas attended Rutgers University where he studied literature. A prodigious writer of fiction, poems, articles, pieces for the theater, and one whom Eleanor W. Traylor has "named" "the great pilot of the legendary Mississippi River" ("Henry Dumas and the Discourse of Memory," *Black American Literature Forum*, Vol. 22, 2, p. 365), Dumas used the South as well as the city as his landscapes for the sometimes surreal word-pictures which add yet another dimension to the black experience.

In many respects, "Goodbye, Sweetwater" reminds us of a Romare Bearden-collage with the leitmotif symbol of the train in the distance—an ever constant reminder of where we must go and what we must do. Throughout the story, we hear the train—the symbol of transference, of passage, beckoning us to a new beginning, to freedom. In many respects, Layton Bridges is Henry Dumas who, from his high perch in the tree, could touch the horizon and finger the train of the future.

What is happening to Holly Springs? And why? What is the sub-textual meaning of the following: "Sometimes after a long freight passed, all he could see was the shadow of the last car streaking across the fallen sun, plunging through the dusty evening, leaving behind only an echo and a hush of loneliness"? For what does Layton wait? What is his resolve at the end of the story? For what are Granny Lincoln and Granny Fields symbols? Why was waving at passenger trains meaningful to Layton? What do you discern about the link between Granny Lincoln and the land? What lesson does the visit by Yul Stencely offer

Layton? What is the difference between being “mad” and being like a “mad dog”? Discuss the differences between Layton’s having been “saved” from falling (“He knew she had seen him fall, and in her voice, he could tell that she was saving him.”) and “If he climbed the tree to see the passenger train, he knew that he would not fall.”

“ALL THE PRETTY LITTLE HORSES,” AN AUTHENTIC SLAVE LULLABY.

The great American composer Aaron Copland arranged in 1952 a set of American songs, of which “The Little Horses” is one of five. As a matter of fact, Copland arranged two sets of songs which he published under the title of *Old American Songs*. It is Copland’s setting that has brought these songs to the attention of a larger audience. In the liner-notes to the recording, it is stated that “The Little Horses” is a Southern lullaby. **“All the Pretty Little Horses”** is much more; unfortunately, Copland did not know that. It is an authentic slave lullaby which was sung by an enslaved African not to her black baby, but to a white baby. The enslaved African sings to her white charge that, when he wakes, he shall have all the pretty little horses and everything a child could want. Her own children will never in her or their lifetime realize all to which they are entitled as human beings.

It is here where we present a number of defining poetic footprints of African Americans as they move from enslavement to personal emancipation.

In addition to classifying the following poems according to Sterling Brown’s “five chief areas of interest,” found on page 484 of the Reader, answer the following questions for each poem: What is the poem about? What happens in it? What of the world is in it?

FRANCES ELLEN WATKINS HARPER, “BURY ME IN A FREE LAND.”

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper was perhaps the most celebrated African-American poet of the nineteenth century. Born on September 24, 1824, in Baltimore, Maryland, and having moved subsequently to Little York, Pennsylvania, where she had opportunities to see the desperate plight in which fugitive slaves on the Underground Railroad found themselves, Harper became the voice of those “voiceless” human beings, working on their behalf with the Maine Antislavery Society and the Underground Railroad Station in Philadelphia. Harper used her literary gifts in the cause of the emancipation of her people, delivering dramatic readings of her poems at antislavery meetings as well as in schools and churches. Her poem, **“Bury Me in a Free Land,”** is taken from her collection entitled *Poems on Miscellaneous Subjects* which was published in 1854 and which saw twenty editions. After a life-long commitment and engagement in the struggle on behalf of her people and women’s suffrage, Harper died of a heart attack

on February 22, 1911.

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR, "WHEN MALINDY SINGS."

The poem **"When Malindy Sings"** is by the other celebrated African-American poet of the nineteenth century—**Paul Laurence Dunbar**. The son of a slave, Dunbar was born in 1872 in Dayton, Ohio, and achieved enormous success with the publication of a volume of verse entitled *Majors and Minors* in 1895 which contains poems in standard English as well as those in dialect. He was the first African-American poet who, perhaps with the exception of Phillis Wheatly, achieved anything close to a national or international reputation. Dunbar's poems were published widely in magazines and newspapers such as *The New York Times*. While Dunbar preferred his poems in standard English, his reputation was won chiefly by the poems in dialect. In 1899 Dunbar's health began to decline as a result of his having contracted tuberculosis. While on his way to a poetry reading in Albany, New York, Dunbar collapsed, forcing him to recuperate for an extended period of time. Having spent time in Harmon, Colorado, upon medical advice, Dunbar went to Jacksonville, Florida, where he continued to recuperate at the home of his friend, James Weldon Johnson. Unable to "shake" the illness, Dunbar returned to Dayton in 1903, where he continued to work and where, on February 9, 1906, he died.

DUDLEY RANDALL, "BOOKER T. AND W. E. B."

Dudley Randall's **"Booker T. and W. E. B."** is a witty and incisive rendering of the dispute between Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois, with which the study guide for Chapter Five has already dealt. Randall was born in Washington, D. C., on January 14, 1914. A mentor to poets such as Sonia Sanchez and the late Audre Lorde, a facilitator of the Black Arts Movement during the '60s and early '70s, and founder of Broadside Press which has published the works of Margaret Walker and Gwendolyn Brooks, Randall provides through his work a celebration and documentation of the African-American experience. An editor of uncommon skill, unwilling to compromise quality for the sake of profit, Randall is credited with having kept alive the Broadside Press in which the works of young and elder African-American poets would continue to have a forum. Randall's works include *Love You* (1970); *More to Remember* (1971); *After the Killing* (1973); *Broadside Memories: Poets I Have Known* (1975); and *A Litany of Friends* (1981).

LANGSTON HUGHES, "THE NEGRO SPEAKS OF RIVERS" and "THE DREAM KEEPER."

Langston Hughes perhaps needs no introduction. Considered one of the most original and accomplished poets of the twentieth century, Hughes has left a legacy of unequaled poignancy and beauty. Hughes was born in Joplin, Missouri, on February 1, 1902. Introduced to the poetry of Paul Laurence Dunbar and Carl Sandburg, Hughes began writing at a very early age. After his parents had divorced, Hughes spent time with his maternal grandmother in Lawrence, Kansas. Having graduated from high school in Cleveland where he lived with his mother, he traveled in 1920 for a second time to Mexico to live with his father to whom he was never close. It was on this second time, while crossing the Mississippi River, that Hughes composed one of his most famous poems, "The Negro Speaks of Rivers." When Hughes returned to the United States in 1921, he enrolled in Columbia University. After only one year at Columbia, Hughes left to join the crew of a ship bound for Africa. Hughes returned to the United States, having lived in France, Italy, and Switzerland. While at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, Hughes was introduced to Charlotte Osgood Mason, a white woman of significant financial means, who, according to Arnold Rampersad in his Hughes-biography, *The Life of Langston Hughes*, became, at the suggestion of Alain LeRoy Locke, a mentor to Hughes as well as to Zora Neale Hurston. With Mason's support, Hughes and many other artists of the Harlem Renaissance were able to survive financially.

A member of the literary circle of the "New Negro" writers Countee Cullen, Arna Bontemps, Zora Neale Hurston, Wallace Thurman, among others and throughout his career, Hughes explored his versatility as a poet, essayist, dramatist and writer of fiction of uncommon spiritual transcendence and, of course, wit and humor. His works include *The Weary Blues* (1926); *Not Without Laughter* (1930); *The Big Sea: An Autobiography* (1940); *I Wonder As I Wander: An Autobiographical Journal* (1957); *Montage of a Dream Deferred* (1951); *The Best of Simple* (1961); *Ask Your Mama* (1961); and *Panther & the Lash* (1967). Rampersad reports at the end of the second volume of his Hughes-biography that Hughes, a few days after leaving a annual dinner party of the Missouri Society in May 1967, experienced severe abdominal pain. Subsequently, he was admitted on May 6th to the New York Polyclinic where, after almost three weeks of valiant attempts to defeat an infection which is alleged to have occurred during an operation, Hughes succumbed. Death was listed as "septic shock."

STERLING ALLEN BROWN, "STRONG MEN," "OLD LEM," and "AFTER WINTER."

Three of Sterling Brown's most memorable and oft recited poems are "Strong Men," "Old Lem," and "After Winter."

Having reviewed Brown's five chief areas of interest of Harlem Renaissance poetry (Reader , 484), how would you classify the three above-referenced poems? Note the complementary voice in "Strong Men." What is the narrative voice in "Old Lem"?

ROBERT HAYDEN, "MIDDLE PASSAGE," "A BALLAD OF REMEMBRANCE," and "RUNAGATE RUNAGATE."

In a new introduction to the recently reissued *Robert Hayden Collected Poems* , poet and critic Michael Harper states that Hayden was "one of the best teachers by example one can find in the poetry of the twentieth century, or any age." Born on August 4, 1913, in Detroit, to Asa and Ruth Sheffey, the poet was named Asa Bundy Sheffey. After his parents had separated, **Robert Hayden** was placed into the foster care of William and Sue Ellen Hayden, but he was never legally adopted. As a child, Hayden confronted the confusion of his life by turning to poetry of the English and Harlem Renaissance writers.

Having majored in Spanish and minored in English, Hayden received the B.A. degree from Detroit City College which is now Wayne State University. He began working in the Federal Writers' Project; subsequently married; and moved with his wife to New York City where he met Harlem Renaissance poet Countee Cullen. Upon returning to Michigan, he pursued the M.A. degree at the University of Michigan, studying with poet W. H. Auden. It is also at the University of Michigan that Hayden and his wife, Erma, became members of the Baha'i faith which brought to both enormous spiritual peace.

Hayden's teaching career began at the University of Michigan where he became the first African-American teacher in the Department of English. Subsequently, he accepted in 1946 a position at Fisk University where he remained until 1968. At that time he returned to the University of Michigan as a visiting professor and became there in 1969 a professor of English.

How do Hayden's poems "Middle Passage" and "Runagate Runagate" resonate what Stephen Henderson called "the great overarching movement of consciousness for Black people"? To what does "Middle Passage" arch back in Chapter Five? Note how Hayden weaves into the poem the ship's log, hymns, and spirituals.

Hayden's poem, "**A Ballad of Remembrance**," is one of more than forty included in the collection of poems which bears the same title as the poem's. The assessment of the poem has been mixed. Richard Barksdale and Kenneth Kinnamon remark in their anthology, *Black Writers of America* , that poem "has more intellectual brilliance than poetic content; philosophic profundity sometimes replaces passionate simplicity" (676). However, Addison Gayle Jr., in his book *The Black Aesthetic* maintains that the poem is "chilling with its whirling, glittering images and rhythms and its feeling of nightmare and irrationality"

(216). On the other hand, the late legendary critic and professor of English at Howard, Arthur Paul Davis, notes in his book, *From the Dark Tower: Afro-American Writers 1900 to 1960*, that Hayden, through his references to "the Zulu King," "quadroon mermaids," etc., had "in mind carnival time in New Orleans, with all of the tawdriness and frivolity which that occasion represents" (177). And it is the arrival of Mark Van Doren, "meditative, ironic, and richly human," who rescues, according to Davis, the poet from the insanity of the carnival world and for whom the poet has written the poem as "souvenir." Mark Van Doren (1894-1972) began his active intellectual and professional life as a professor of English at Columbia University. In the "Introduction" of *The Selected Letters of Mark Van Doren*, George Hendrick remarks that "[i]t was his poetry . . . that most engaged him." In the volume *Poets* in the series *Great Writers of the English Language*, William Claire notes of Van Doren's art: "He treated his principal subject, the cosmos, love, finality, family matters, and particularly children, animals, paradox, and knowledge in a lucid manner that transcends simplistic notions of modernity and personal sensibilities. There is a passionate intelligence lurking behind many of this poems that somehow never intrudes." It should, therefore, be obvious why Hayden was moved by Van Doren's work, for Hayden too sought and achieved in his work a kind of clarity reminiscent of that which is present in Van Doren's poetic expressions.

For the collection, *A Ballad of Remembrance*, which he published privately in 1962 in London, Hayden won the 1966 Grand Prize for Poetry at the First World Festival of Negro Arts in Dakar, Senegal. Before his death in 1980, Hayden published, among other things, *The Night-Blooming Cerus* (1970), *Angle of Ascent* (1975), and *American Journal* (1978); was the recipient of many honors and awards; and served as a consultant in poetry at the Library of Congress and as writer-in-residence at Howard University.

E. ETHELBERT MILLER, "TOMORROW," "W. E. B. DU BOIS," and "MALCOLM X, AUGUST 1952."

E. Ethelbert Miller, poet, critic, and the Director of the African-American Resource Center at Howard University, provides three lean poems entitled "**Tomorrow**," "**W. E. B. Du Bois**," and "**Malcolm X, August 1952**." The author of seven books of poems, the most recent of which is *Whispers, Secrets and Promises*, and editor of three anthology of poems—an *opus* for which he has received numerous awards, Miller is the founder and director of the Ascension Poetry Reading Series and serves presently on the boards of the Institute of Policy Studies, the PEN/Faulkner Foundation, Edmund Burke School and Washington Area Lawyers for the Arts.

Comment on Miller's "Tomorrow" and Hayden's "Middle Passage." To which historic moment does Miller's "Malcolm X, August 1952" make reference?

MARI EVANS, "I AM A BLACK WOMAN."

"I am a Black Woman" by Mari Evans completes the circle and complements to a degree the first reading selection of the *Reader*. One of the many important poetic voices which came out of the black arts movement of the '60s, Evans was born in Toledo, Ohio, where she remained to attend the University of Toledo. Her works include *Where Is All the Music* (1968); *I Am a Black Woman* (1970); *Night Star* (1981); and *Black Women Writers 1950-1980: A Critical Evaluation*, a collection of essays which won critical acclaim. In addition to her volumes of poetry, Evans has produced two dramatic pieces entitled *River of My Song* (1977) and *Eyes* (1979). In all of her works, Evans emphasizes the black woman whose beauty and strength are fixed, buried in her flesh.

Was not Margaret Garner, "The Slave Mother Who Killed Her Child," "strong/beyond all definition still/defying place/and time/and circumstance/assailed/impervious/indestructible"?

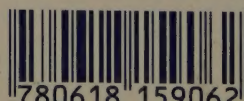
What are the "journeys" on which the "Black Woman" takes the reader? What are the allusions to Nat, Anzio, Da Nang, and Pork Chop Hill? What was the "Peace" "her" son never knew? What kind of woman is Evans' "Black Woman"?



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